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"THIS ONE IS A VAGINA WITH TEETH"
SAVAGES TALK US THROUGH THEIR HOLIDAY SNAPS

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ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING ROUND THE SKULLS OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK

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TRACK OF THE WEEK

DIZZEE RASCAL FEAT. ROBBIE WILLIAMS

Goin' Crazy

It's nothing new to point out that Dizzee Rascal has embraced pop in a way nobody could have predicted. His last album proper – 2009's 'Tongue N' Cheek' – produced massive smashes including 'Bonkers', 'Holiday' and 'Dance Wiv Me', the latter of which saw him collaborate with Calvin Harris *waaaaay* before Rihanna did. But indulge us as we employ some hindsight for just a moment. Thinking back a decade to 2003, when the grime prodigy was gearing up to release first single 'I Luv U',

kickstarting a year in which he would win the Mercury Prize, you do wonder what the then 18-year-old would think of the 2013 version of Dizzee. 'Goin' Crazy' is his most radio-friendly hit yet, the first taste from his forthcoming fifth album.

The boy from Bow solidifies his position at the top of the pop game

Love it or hate it, over three and a half minutes, the boy from Bow solidifies his position at the top of the pop game. But then his new friend Robbie does know a bit about writing big hits.

The song itself mines the same territory as 'Tongue N' Cheek'. Dizzee's verses skip by quickly as a catchy chorus from Robbie dominates. Talk about the past all you like, as Dizzee Rascal in 2013 says: "Middle finger in the air, don't give a care, goin' full throttle". Proof, if any were needed, that Dizzee belongs to the masses.

David Renshaw, News Reporter



KATY B

What Love Is Made Of
When Katy B first heard producer Geeneus making this beat she apparently shouted, "YES! Definitely!" Darker than anything on her debut, it's slinky, housey, has an irresistibly pouty hook and will have you doing gun fingers before the first chorus. She's still on a mission to make you dance.

Sian Rowe, Assistant Reviews Editor

LAURYN HILL

Neurotic Society
It doesn't matter that 'Neurotic Society' isn't mastered sleekly, has no hook and was released (cynically?) just as Hill was heading to prison. Because this jerky rant is worth waiting over a decade for. Welcome back, L-Boogie.

Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

MARINA & THE DIAMONDS & CHARLI XCX

Just Desserts
Juddering beats, playground taunts and eerily sedate vocals – Marina and Charli's debut collaboration sounds like it was created by nunchuck-wielding twins with serious intentions to injure their mutual ex. Potty-mouthed pop.

Harriet Gibsone, writer

ISLET

Triangulation Station
Taking an excursion with the Welsh band Islet is like getting into the back seat of a car blindfolded. Guided by the vehicle's movement, you will have absolutely no idea what corner you're going to turn next or where you're going to end up. So just lay back and relax in the bosom of its bulbous cloud of psychedelic dreaminess.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

I Appear Missing
Margaret Thatcher's death? Alex Ferguson's resignation from managing Manchester United? Both small fry in the face of the new Queens Of The Stone Age album, which has a cast list of collaborators that reads like the

Debrett's of rock'n'roll. This is another of Josh Homme's dramatic rock growls, with riffs that are, quite frankly, bigger than the sun.

Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor

BLACK FLAG

Down In The Dirt
The band that launched a thousand brutalist tattoos (and Frank Turner) are back, without Henry Rollins or, it seems, much in the way of a budget. Sounding like it was recorded inside their bassist's armpit, 'Down In The Dirt' – which sees the return of the classic 1979-'80 line-up – is fittingly raw and ravaged.

Mark Beaumont, writer

THE ORWELLS

Other Voices
Something great is happening in Chicago, spearheaded by teenage punks The Orwells and their fuzzbox buddies Twin Peaks. 'Other Voices', produced by Dave Sitek, is perhaps the best thing to emerge from the scene so far. A raucous three-minute take on Stones-y R&B, it's the canny Iggy-gone-crazy vocal that really makes it fly.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

SKY LARKIN

Motto
Fresh from touring the planet as part of Wild Beasts' live band, Katie Harkin returns to her day job with Sky Larkin. This Sonic Youth-tinged taste of the Leeds band's third record snarls and strains at the leash. You can take the girl out of Wild Beasts, but you can't take the wild heart out of the girl.

Kevin EG Perry, Assistant Editor, NME.COM



TEMPLES

Colours To Life
Modern music's obsession with mining 'Tomorrow Never Knows'-era Beatles continues with handsome Kettering crew Temples. Frontman James Bagshaw looks exactly like Marc Bolan, and 'Colours To Life' is all multi-coloured psychedelic fabulousness. I give it a YES.

Tom Howard, Reviews Editor

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UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING
IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

Edited by Dan Stubbs



MAIN
EVENT

WHY THE WORLD NEEDS A NEW BLUR ALBUM

Damon Albarn told a Hong Kong crowd last week that Blur are recording a new album. OK, we've heard that before, but this time it really really really could happen. **Matt Wilkinson** tells us why it could be their best yet



Pretty much everybody missed it when it happened, but at the beginning of May the following message went up on Blur's official Twitter account, only to be deleted moments later: "@blurofficial: 1 day till BLAST OFF! New single Stars gets its first play @R2KenBruce show on @BBCRadio2 at 11.15am tmrw!"

Radio 2? Ken Bruce? "Blast off"? What the fuck's happened to Colchester's finest? And, more importantly, NEW SINGLE?!!

It turns out this was the cruellest

admin mistake of all time – 'Stars' is actually the comeback track by dinky Take That warbler Mark Owen (it's rubbish, obviously), and yet somehow, someone at some record label got his Twitter account mixed up with Blur's one. Whatever. The fact is it was the latest in a long, long line of rumours, teasers and myths to emerge about Damon and co's supposed comeback album, which is surely now – with Bowie's 'The Next Day' finally out and proud – the most hotly anticipated record on the planet. Sure, Daft Punk have proved you can still inspire instant fervour with a canny, awe-inspiring marketing plan, and we can all live in hope for a new Roses or Pulp opus.

But Blur? They're in a different league altogether, for two simple reasons: 1) There's a very good chance that a new record might actually materialise before 2023; and 2) It stands a very good chance of being every bit as brilliant – life-affirming, no less – as 'Parklife', or '13', or 'Modern Life Is Rubbish'.

For once, I thought what Alan McGee had to say in last week's *NME* was totally right. Damon Albarn *is* a genius. He's now the only major British songwriter from the '90s who hasn't hung up his guitar,

suffered a massive dip in talent or disappeared completely up his own arse (hi, Thom Yorke). What's more, can you think of anyone else Damon's age (45) who is still intent on pushing the boundaries quite so much while striving to remain wholly relevant to the rest of the mainstream? For comparison's sake, Paul McCartney was deep in the nadir of his career when he was around the same age (you're advised to give 1984's

**"We're gonna try
and make another
record this week"**

DAMON ALBARN

tragically shite Beatles pastiche 'Give My Regards To Broad Street' and 1986's career nadir 'Press To Play' a miss; Jagger was washed up among a sea of desperate solo albums; and The Beach Boys had started making er, rap records.



Damon at Coachella 2013, pondering whether to make a new record



Celebrating their Outstanding Contribution To Music Brit Award In 2012

'Out Of Time', hopefully not trying to tell us something.

You have to hope Blur come good on their word. 'Think Tank' from 2003 had a handful of amazing songs on it, but as a last hurrah it feels distinctly lacking. Since then, the band have proved with recent releases 'Fool's Day' and 'Under The Westway' that they can still be totally mesmerising as a studio outfit – up there with any new act today, for sure. So it would be particularly lame for them to be bullshitting us about their latest plans. I saw their Coachella shows recently where, despite an inquisitive crowd, they were every bit as thrilling as they were

at their Glastonbury 2009 peak. Where The Stone Roses faltered in California due to a lack of interest from the EDM-loving American masses, Blur took the difficult audience as a challenge,



At Hong Kong Asia World Expo, where Damon announced 'the news'

pummelling us senseless until we had little option but to lose our shit altogether. It worked because they're

still a class act. And if they can just manage to harness that energy and bring it into the studio, we could be in for something very

special indeed in the not too distant future. Until then though? Well, we've always got Mark Owen's 'Stars'.

The four Blur boys are still total heroes. We need them now as much as ever

Compared to that – Alex James' cheese farm an' all – the four Blur boys still look like total heroes. Which is exactly why we need them now as much as ever. Truth be told, I'm not even that surprised when stories about the new album emerge any more, so used am I to Graham Coxon or Damon casually dropping the odd line about "having a meet up" or "turning the tape recorder on" and then seeing nothing come of

it. But there was something about the way they announced their most recent update – onstage in front of thousands of screaming fans in the Far East – that made their plans seem that little bit more tangible than usual. "So we have a week in Hong Kong," Damon teased. "And we thought it would be a good time to try and record another record – so we're gonna try and make one here..." And then they launched straight into

THE BLUR FILES

A potted history of Blur's comeback...

OF ALL THE REUNIONS that have swamped the festival circuit over the past five years, Blur's smacked most of unfinished business. As adventurous as '13' was, it wasn't quite the 'White Album' masterpiece we knew they were capable of. 'Think Tank' was an accomplished swansong, but



its general lack of Graham lent it an air of incompleteness. As last year's sprawling '21' box-set proved, Blur were always a virulently creative force, so when they reunited in 2009 for a run of outdoor gigs and festival-headliners under the see-how-it-

goes premise of Damon repairing his relationship with Graham, there were always going to be fresh bursts of songwriting fireworks. Sure enough, the casual encounters turned into 2010's Record Store Day single 'Fool's Day' and then the sublime 'Under The Westway' in 2012, at which point a new album seemed inevitable. Here

PARLOPHONE



was a band clearly loving the thrill of playing together, getting such tokens of belated respect as the 2012

Outstanding Contribution Brit award and still with steam in the tanks. Sessions with William Orbit last year were halted by Damon with only a few tracks finished, but their continued live



Damon has a read of our article before singing a song

activity – last year's ill-fated Hyde Park show and this summer's spate of festival shows – suggested it was only a matter of time before they'd all find themselves in the vicinity of a recording studio with

itchy knob-twiddling fingers and a week to kill. The only question is, since Morocco had such a major impact on the sound of 'Think Tank', what could Hong Kong do to album eight?

"FFS, beige just isn't my colour"



Marion Cotillard drops the ketchup



'Bohemian Rhapsody' goes A-list

THE JEAN JESUS

David Bowie plays the Messiah in his new video. But what does it all mean? We asked a theology expert to pick apart the themes in 'The Next Day'

It's a story now sewn into the very fabric of western culture – the outsider whose divine wisdom and messianic magic made worshippers of millions, and whose incredible resurrection wowed the world. But enough about David Bowie – let's talk about Jesus Christ. The Son Of God makes an appearance in the video for 'The Next Day', played by Bowie, rubbing shoulders with French actress Marion Cotillard and Brit thesp Gary Oldman. Directed by Floria Sigismundi, who has shot videos for Marilyn Manson and Björk, it features angels, prostitutes, horny priests and platters of human eyes. But what's it all about? *NME* asked Dr Jon Balsarak, lecturer in Theology & Religious Studies at the University Of Bristol ("and a huge, huge Bowie fan") for some guidance.

THE BLOODY STIGMATA

The holes that appear in Marion Cotillard's hands are called stigmata. Dr Balsarak explains: "Throughout the Middle Ages, pious individuals – mostly men – would have nail prints appear in their palms and sometimes actually bleed. Marion's character has the wounds of Christ. Jesus in the Gospel does have several female friends who he has platonic relations with,

nothing more than that. But there are attempts by some to portray those relationships as more. This seems to lean that way too."

THE SEX-CRAZED PRIEST

Gary Oldman as the priest is a sex-crazed, altar boy-smacking bastard. Dr Balsarak: "It looks like he's enticing the girl into making her have sex with him. Then when things go haywire. When Marion's character begins bleeding, he panics and blames Jesus. If there's any allegory that Bowie's playing off here, it's Jesus as someone who's come into a world already governed by religious figures – the Pharisees, these hypocrites who don't care about religion at all, but abuse it for their own power and means."

GORE AND GUTS

While bloody videos are often a sign of shock tactics, that's not the case here. Dr Balsarak: "A lot of the time when you have music videos that play with religious symbolism and iconography it feels like it's gratuitous, designed for grabbing headlines. It's pretty gross, but c'mon, it's David Bowie! He's not an artist who needs to garner attention. It's not as explicit or as subversive as Madonna's 'Like A Prayer' video."

THE WHITE DUKE'S ANGEL

Dr Balsarak: "Angels appear throughout the Gospels of Matthew or John, often at times when Jesus is in some kind of trouble. Bowie as Jesus is clearly in some sort of trouble here." Not a veiled barb at his ex-wife, Angie Bowie, who criticised the star's comeback, then?

JESUS OF... WETHERSPOON?

People usually worship Jesus in church, but this time we're in a pub. Dr Balsarak: "I have no idea why it is set in a pub. Maybe it's an attempt to set their

invention, their story, in an allegorical place that's relatable to modern society."

EYEBALL ODDITY

If it is a 'Spoons, then the menu's taken a turn for the weird – among the stranger images in the video is a platter of human eyes. Dr Balsarak: "There are plenty of places in the Gospel where Jesus cures blind people. But I think this image goes along with the general medieval flavour of the video, the image of suffering and penance and torture that you see at the start – like the man whipping his own back." Er, we'll stick to the fruit machines, thanks.

OH! YOU OUTRAGEOUS THING

Some people who aren't so impressed with the new Bowie video...

THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE

The US religious group say the video is blasphemous and have labelled Bowie a "bisexual senior citizen from London". Bill Donohue, the group's leader, says the video "reflects the artist – it is a mess". All this from a man who defended the Catholic Church during a recent spate of sex abuse revelations.

FORMER ARCHBISHOP

"I doubt that Bowie would have the courage to use Islamic imagery," said former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey. "Frankly, I don't get offended by such juvenilia – Christians should have the courage to rise above offensive language, although I hope Bowie recognises he may be upsetting some people."

YOUTUBE

The website's knee-jerk reaction to the Bowie controversy was to pull the video from the site, but YouTube later admitted to making "the wrong call". A spokesperson for the site said: "When it's brought to our attention that a video has been removed mistakenly, we act quickly to reinstate it."

NOT HOME ALONE



Last week, Macaulay Culkin moved into Pete Doherty's flat. Gavin Haynes looks into Pete's diary to see how the first seven days might have panned out

DAY ONE

Strange scenes. Arrived home and Macaulay had placed ball bearings in the lounge. A vat of hot oil stood balanced precariously on a shelf above the pantry, booby-trapped by a length of rope.

"Mac. No need for home security," I reminded him. "I sold the last of the furniture weeks ago."

"Nonsense. It's my art installation," he replied. "The ball bearings symbolise negative space. The oil's a reference to George W Bush."

"Cheeky," I said. "Hurry up and sell it to Saatchi, then. I think the electricity's going to be cut off any day now."

DAY TWO

Oh dear. One of those quintessential 'houseshare scenarios'.

"Why didn't you buy a fresh loaf of bread while you were out?" Macaulay snapped when I got back.

"Because neither of us has eaten solids in months," I reminded him.

At this, he looked quizzical for a moment. Then pained. Then he just went back to rocking back and forth on the spot where the sofa used to be.

DAY THREE

Mac very low upon his return from the pâté shop.

"My French is going backwards," he said. "I was stood there and I couldn't even think of the word for 'duck'."

"It's *canard*," I said.

"You're telling me," he replied. "It's damn near impossible."

DAY FOUR

A disastrous evening's carousing. We went up the tattooist's. In cultural communion, I was to get the image of Verlaine on my arm. Mac was to have the poet Rimbaud. Unfortunately his



Pete's weekly packages from 'Dodgy Dave' had arrived



Mac's stuff

French is still a mite too broad, and his attention span too numbed. Long story, but he now has Rambo curled around his bicep. From here, I can still hear him weeping in the bathroom.

DAY FIVE

Finally got round to quizzing Mac on the intrigue that was his Michael Jackson friendship. "But why," I wondered, "would you devote so much of your time to hanging around with a washed-up – albeit once much-idolised – entertainer, with persistent delusions of grandeur and a lifestyle that could really only end in dissolute death?" He gave me one of his famous 'head to the side' looks. Why, I do not know.

DAY SIX

For all London's charm, glad to have left the urchin lifestyle behind. No more Wolfman. No Scarborough Steve. Farewell, Jimmy Five Bellies. Sophistication at last. I was expressing this to Mac when Davide Dangereux came round, saying Jean Animateux had dropped him out of a moving Citroën and could he borrow my boules ball to go round and smash his face in with? I told him it was in for repairs. He left.

DAY SEVEN

Power out. "Sorry Bilo," I entreated. "Biggles forgot to send EDF Energy their chequy-weque this month. Was way too busy composing more artistic things. But never mind – let's fill in the darkening with some entertainment. I've got at least a dozen new poems I know you'd love to hear..." At this, he clapped both pale white hands on his cheeks. Pursed his mouth into an 'o'. And let out a bloodcurdling scream. Bit of a mistake, Mac's turned out to be. Feel like I may start looking on Gumtree again, tbh.



Matt Berninger gets the arty started

'SORROW' SEEMS TO BE THE LONGEST SONG...

The National play 'Sorrow' 108 times in a row. It's all in the name of art

Earlier this month, Brooklyn's gloom lords The National played 'Sorrow' – a track from 2010's 'High Violet' album – again and again, without a break, for six hours straight. The bizarre endurance test was a collaboration with Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson. Aptly titled A Lot Of Sorrow, the extra-long performance took place at Long Island art gallery PS1, where the band became a live-action installation.

"It was a weird experience," singer Matt Berninger chuckles. "It's not about pain or discomfort, it's more about the strange, euphoric state you reach through the repetition of something. We ended up playing it, officially, 108 times."

Berninger says the real test of performing the three-and-a-half-minute lament in front of a packed crowd over and over was more emotional than physical. "There was one moment in the last hour when I lost my nerve a little bit," he admits. "Things start going through your head. It's a really sad song and I guess after 90 times it'll eventually get to you. It came out of nowhere and I choked up a little bit. I got it together pretty quickly, but I was annoyed at myself for losing my nerve in front of a bunch of artsy fartsy types!"

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"Shit, I've forgotten the words! It was so much easier on *Gossip Girl*..."



BEING BUCKLEY

Actor Penn Badgley has taken on the role of Jeff Buckley for a new film. He tells us how he did it

Jeff Buckley's shoes are tough ones to fill, but that's what Penn Badgley had to do for *Greetings From Tim Buckley*. Documenting Jeff's fraught relationship with his estranged father Tim through two juxtaposing storylines, the film centres around the 1991 tribute concert to the '70s folk singer at which Jeff made his public singing debut. Not only does the former *Gossip Girl* actor portray the late singer, he also does all his own singing and guitar-playing in the film. Here, in his own words, are Badgley's Top Five tips on how to become Jeff Buckley. "Step one," he chuckles, "get a shovel..."

1 LOVE YOUR SUBJECT

"When I was 17 years old, I discovered Jeff Buckley's 'Live At Sin-e' album, which is still to this day one of my favourite albums ever. He was an athlete. The fact he could play live for two and a half hours straight and he'd be drinking red wine, espresso and cold water the whole time, which are the worst things for your voice. And his guitar playing is simply immaculate. Really unbelievable. So, as a young teenager, I was really influenced by him."

2 WORRY WHAT PEOPLE WILL THINK...

"You think of Jeff spinning in his grave, you think of his mother, you think of his fans, you think of them all thinking, 'Who the fuck does this guy think he is?!' Trust me, I was concerned about my ability. But I just wanted to do him justice and rise to the challenge."

3 ...BUT DON'T TRY TOO HARD

"The movie takes place when he was so unrefined and undefined – just pure, raw talent. So I was given a lot of

"I wanted to rise to the challenge and do Jeff justice"

PENN BADGLEY

room to see how many notes I could hit, as opposed to imitating, say, that little lilt in 'Lover, You Should Have Come Over'. I didn't have to do that. Even if I wanted to – which I did – it's good that's not what it was."

4 USE WHAT YOU KNOW

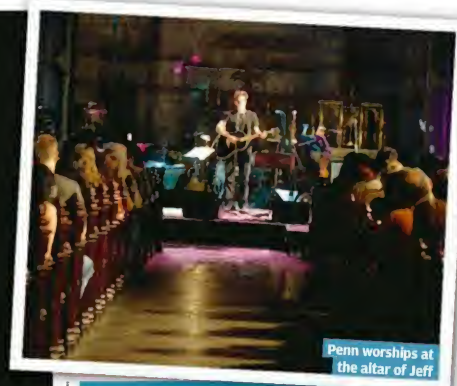
"In the film Jeff is starting to realise that he grew up resenting his father, casting him aside because he wasn't there. And then he realises that parents are human and they, at some point, had no fucking idea what to do either. I have a very strong relationship with my dad now, but at that time I was exorcising certain demons with him. So I understood that space Jeff was in."

5 DON'T GET OVERWHELMED

"My guitar playing especially was really rusty, but the Tim songs were actually all fairly intuitive, except 'I Never Asked To Be Your Mountain'. I'm playing and singing and there's three time changes, and as a person who never learned to read music, and just taught myself, I'm singing and playing and it's all getting recorded and I'm being Jeff Buckley on top of it and I'm just like, 'Jesus Christ!' That was kind of intense."

GREETINGS FROM TIM BUCKLEY

is available now to UK viewers via Tribeca Film On Demand on iTunes, Virgin Media and PlayStation



Penn worships at the altar of Jeff

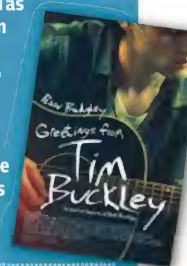
BUCKETLOADS OF BUCKLEY

A rundown of the three Jeff Buckley films in the works

Title: *Greetings From Tim Buckley*
Due: Doing the rounds

What's the plot? A split narrative about Jeff's relationship with his estranged father, and the 1991 tribute concert to Tim Buckley at which Jeff made his public singing debut. There's also a love story around Buckley Jr.

Who's in it? Penn Badgley as Jeff Buckley, Ben Rosenfield as Tim Buckley and Imogen Poots as Allie, the love interest. Kate Nash also makes a brief appearance. Chances of being the definitive JB film: It's the first of the Buckley films to see the light of day, but it hasn't got the



Title: *A Pure Drop*
Due: TBA

What's the plot? Details are thin on the ground, but this film, based on Jeff Apter's 2009 book, *A Pure Drop: The Life Of Jeff Buckley*, also focuses on the relationship between father and son.

Who's in it? TBA
Chances of being the definitive JB film: So little is known about it at this stage, it's impossible to tell.

Title: *Mystery White Boy*
Due: TBA

What's the plot? A warts-and-all account of Jeff Buckley's life.

Who's in it? Patricia Arquette as Jeff's mother. Reeve Carney was set to play Jeff, but when Amy Berg took over from Jake Scott (Ridley Scott's son) as director, that changed. James Franco's name has been mentioned, but nothing is confirmed as yet. Chances of being the definitive JB film: It's the one that's been officially sanctioned by the Buckley estate and will feature his music, but it's taking such a long time to come to fruition that it may well lose that advantage.

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HOW HOP FARM BECAME THE LATEST FESTIVAL CASUALTY

As the Kent event shuts, **Barry Nicolson** finds out what state this year's festivals are in

Last week, Hop Farm became the first high-profile casualty of the 2013 festival season, with promoter

Vince Power pulling the plug after months of poor ticket sales. After struggling through last year's loss-making event, Power had downsized the festival – which in the past has attracted marquee names like Neil Young, Prince and Bob Dylan – in order to make it more financially viable, booking My Bloody Valentine and Rodriguez to headline. In the end, however, it just wasn't enough. "It became a matter of damage limitation," he told *NME*. "I had to do it sooner rather than later."

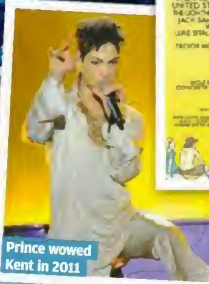
The cancellation caps a miserable year for Power, one of the architects of the modern British music festival. After Hop Farm's underperformance in 2012, Power's company, Music Festivals PLC, had its shares suspended, and the promoter was forced to buy back Benicàssim – his "major festival" – from the administrators amid reports of unpaid artist fees and confusion over who exactly owned the festival. Despite Hop Farm's fate, however, Power insists that this year's Benicàssim will be unaffected. "Benicàssim is still secure," he told *NME*. "We've sold a lot of tickets and it's doing well. What happened last year



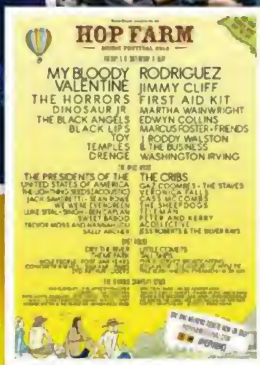
Kool And The Gang were concerned about rainfall at Hop Farm 2012



Former headliner Bob Dylan



Prince wowed Kent in 2011



was that I floated a company called Music Festivals PLC, and within that

company was Hop Farm, Feis festival and Benicàssim. The company went into administration because of lack of investment, and our share price crashed. This meant that Maraworld, the trading company for Benicàssim, also suffered. But the festival itself actually did well last year. It was the other festivals which put it under pressure."

Power also sought to clarify Benicàssim's ownership status, assuring us that "I own the majority

of Benicàssim. I bought it out of receivership along with some other investors, but I am still the majority shareholder. Benicàssim is secure."

Last year, 57 British festivals were cancelled, of which the most notable were Sonisphere and The Big Chill. Power believes that the slow rate of economic recovery, along with an over-saturation of events, a rise in artist fees and a lack of diversity among headliners, has led to a situation where, as he puts it, "No festival can be taken for granted." But as punters have had to become more selective about the events they can afford to attend, more keep springing up, with a limited pool of bands to draw headliners from. As Power points out, it's getting harder to offer something unique, and that is what festivals are living or dying by.

But it's premature to say the bubble has burst. Some British festivals are thriving. One of those is Kendal Calling, whose promoter Andy Smith told us, "We're doing pretty much what we've always done ticket-wise, and we're well on track to sell out again for

our eighth consecutive year." Similarly, Gareth Cooper of Festival No 6 – which was voted Best Small Festival at this year's NME Awards – says he's optimistic about selling out this year, and that Hop Farm's struggles aren't indicative of a wider malaise. "I wouldn't say festivals are on their arse," he says. "It's all about planning your niche. With Festival No 6, we're trying to draw the focus away from the music and focus on Portmeirion as a location. Hop Farm never really sold out, and I never quite knew what kind of crowd it was going for, and as a promoter, you really need to know that to succeed."

As for Hop Farm itself, Power is adamant that we haven't seen the last of it. "When something like this happens," he says, "even though I've been around for 30 years, you do lose a bit of credibility. So I intend to spend the next months restructuring my company and bringing more investment in. I definitely want to bring Hop Farm back."

ICONIC: CAPITAL PICTURES; TOM MARTIN; PATRICIA BOARD

CREAM OF THE CROP

There are loads of amazing new festivals that are thriving. We pick five of the best...

FESTIVAL NO 6

What: Had its inaugural year in 2012 and won the NME Award for Best Small Festival in February. The organisers of the Portmeirion festival are optimistic about this year too.
When: September 13–15
Buy: Weekend tickets from £180; festivalnumber6.com

KENDAL CALLING

What: Since the first event in 2006, this has sold out every year – a feat few festivals can lay claim to. Its serene Lake District setting and strong line-ups have played a part in that.
When: July 26–28
Buy: Weekend tickets from £115; kendalcalling.co.uk

BESTIVAL

What: Rob Da Bank's Isle Of Wight event has gone from strength to strength, and has now become a fixture of the festival calendar. One of the very best happenings out there.
When: September 5–8
Buy: Weekend tickets from £180; bestival.net

BEACONS

What: With low prices, a modest capacity and a fiercely independent ethos, Beacons is established as one of Britain's best small festivals since undergoing a makeover in 2011.
When: August 16–18
Buy: Weekend tickets from £99.50; greetingsfrombeacons.com

SECRET GARDEN PARTY

What: An eclectic and offbeat event that has grown year on year since first being held in 2004. It's attracted big names, but its success is down to the unusual and eccentric vibe.
When: July 25–28
Buy: Weekend tickets from £142.50; secretgardenparty.com



Festival No 6 takes no prisoners



Fancy dress is mandatory at Festival No 6

GOOD TIME CHARLIES

Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs celebrate the release of their debut album by headlining the latest Jack Daniel's JD Roots homecoming show, part of NME's search for Britain's Best Small Venue in association with Jack Daniel's JD Roots

They've only been together for little over a year but Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs aren't hanging around. Their debut album 'Clarietta' is released this week (May 20) and it's smothered in '70s New York art-punk glamour from start to finish.

"I'm not a massive fan of English punk music," shrugs Charlie. "I like how the American bands made it more sexual and had these doo-wop and girl-group elements. The music's just so exciting, too – that's what we wanted to do."

Nailing the sound of the scene that surrounded Television, The Modern Lovers and their ilk, the Voyeurs brought in another post-punk hero to help shape the album – producer and former Orange Juice frontman Edwyn Collins.

"A few years ago, I was obsessed with an Orange Juice B-side called 'Breakfast Time'," admits Charlie, "so working with Edwyn was great. Every time he walked into the room, he'd have a new idea. We took as much as we could from him because it's the first record we've ever made and he's made a lot."

On June 6, the band bring 'Clarietta' to London's Shacklewell Arms, where they played their first ever gig, to put on a special show for JD Roots as part of NME's Britain's Best Small Venue campaign in association with Jack Daniel's JD Roots. Joined by grunge menaces Loom, it's a gig they're very



much looking forward to.

"We played there in February last year supporting Toy so it's going to be really cool to go back. The Shacklewell Arms is one of my favourite small venues too, it's always good for watching small bands."

That show is the first in a three-gig

"Without small venues, my band would be nowhere"

CHARLIE BOYER

series that also sees rock'n'roll siblings The Family Rain heading back to their hometown at Bath Moles (June 13) and '60s revivalists The Ruen Brothers return to Scunthorpe's Priory Hotel (June 20).

"Without small venues, my band would be nowhere because we'd have no live experience," Charlie says. "Being good live is important as that's where you learn the ropes. Small venues are completely essential."



Charlie and co are set to return to the place they played their first ever gig: London's Shacklewell Arms

WIN TICKETS TO THE SHOWS!

CHARLIE BOYER AND The Voyeurs, Loom, The Family Rain and The Ruen Brothers are all confirmed to play the upcoming JD Roots shows, and we've got tickets to give away for every gig! For your chance to win entry to these amazing shows, head to NME.COM/smallvenues.

SUPPORT SMALL VENUES!

NME and Jack Daniel's JD Roots' annual search for Britain's Best Small Venue in association with Jack Daniel's JD Roots is well under way, with thousands of votes already counted. The shortlisted venues will be announced in next

week's NME, plus details of how you can help your favourite venue win in 2013. Don't forget, small venues are the lifeblood of the UK music scene, so show your support!



Who is Leonard Bopper?

...the debut album by CASE SPRINGS

...accompanied by a brand new animated mystery novella...

WhoisLeonardBopper.com

Release Date: MONDAY 13TH MAY 2013
Official Launch Party: 9PM THE WATER RATS LONDON FRIDAY 17TH MAY 2013

RDGLDGRN

MILLION FANS OUT MAY 20TH





Mac often sleeps on a bed of hay

MAC DEMENTED

Slacker troubadour Mac DeMarco hits UK shores this week – but will he bring his ‘anal drumsticks’?

The Canadian poster-boy for slacker delinquents, Mac DeMarco has garnered a reputation for putting on some of the most raucous live shows around. One of the biggest hitters at this year's South By Southwest, he's set to take next week's Great Escape festival by storm. From his bizarre DIY videos to his lascivious debut 'Rock And Roll Night Club' and it's follow-up '2', DeMarco is master of Jonathan Richman-like calypso-soaked riffage. But what terrible skeletons lurk in his closet? From transvestites shooting heroin to naked U2 covers, he tells us about some of the strange and terrible experiences that have made Mac DeMarco the man he is today...

SMACK-SHOOTIN' TRANSVESTITES

"I was 16 and had a fake ID. I went to a bar with my friend Jeremy, who's a bit older, and there was this famous Canadian transvestite there called Lexi Tronic. She was doing heroin while a photographer took pictures. That was pretty fucked up to see that at that age."

JERKIN' OFF AT THE VET'S

"The first job I had was at a vets when I was 14. It sucked. I'd walk the dogs, but they were all sick with diarrhoea. I jacked off a lot, in the kennel bathrooms. I got bladder infections. Touching sick animals then jacking off is bad."

ANAL DRUMSTICKS AND NAKED U2 COVERS

"One night in Montreal before a show I loaded my iPod with backing tracks

I could sing over. I wasn't even supposed to be playing. I went onstage, people were taking off my pants, someone was pouring beer on me, I was screaming and then I turned around and shoved two drumsticks up my ass, right at the crescendo of U2's 'Beautiful Day', when the vocals were really soaring. It got on YouTube. My whole family saw it. That's what 'Freaking Out The Neighborhood' is about."

CRAZED STRIPPER FANS

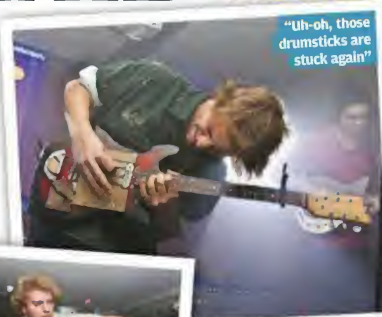
"I was playing at a house party. This girl I knew who'd become a stripper was there. While playing she kept coming up to me and grabbing me and hitting her head against mine. She swung at me and I fell back on the bass drum. She sat on me while I was lying on the drum and I had my guitar on top of me. Then she punched my friend Chris in the face."

SHITTY TOURING

"When we first toured America we were infatuated with pissing in jugs. I don't know why, because there were places to stop. I took a shit in a Cheetos bag once. We'd make these little tents in the corners of the car and then jack off. It's disgusting, I know, but you know... we were 18-year-olds on tour, living it up."

TEACHIN' COMPUTERS TO THE VIETNAMESE

"I signed up for community work in Vancouver. After being put in a school, they put me in a community centre.



"Uh-oh, those drumsticks are stuck again"



"Take me to the stage!"

I taught these old Vietnamese couples how to plug their computers in. All they wanted was to search for pictures of the Yangtze, 'cos that's where they honeymooned."

SMOKIN' LIKE STEVE MCQUEEN

My track 'Ode To Viceroy' is about a brand of cigarettes. I like them because they're cheap. People wave them at me at shows now. Viceroy is owned by British American Tobacco. Steve McQueen used to endorse them. I think it was a nicer smoke in the '30s and '60s, but now it's just the cheapest cigarette."

NME SECRET SHOWS AT THE GREAT ESCAPE!

Mac DeMarco is playing one of NME's shows at Brighton's Great Escape festival this weekend, alongside Melody's Echo Chamber, Klaxons, Temples and more. And at Friday night's Radar showcase at The Haunt, Merchandise will be joined by two very special top-secret guests. For full details go to NME.COM.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

FROM THE NME NEWSROOM

CHOCs AWAY

Liam Gallagher nearly died when he ate a blue M&M and it sent him into anaphylactic shock. Now he knows he has a peanut allergy, he carries a syringe around with him. It's "proper Pete Doherty gear", Liam says.



Liam gets nutted

GOVE IT A REST

The reputed size of Mick Jagger's penis has come up again with the news that Education Secretary Michael Gove once mocked the frontman after peeing next to him at a urinal. Well, it takes a little cock to know one.

WHO'S GOT A RAZOR?

Hirsute Scottish indie pin-up Simon Neil has shocked Biffy Clyro fans by shaving off his beard. It couldn't be anything to do with those unflattering David Brent comparisons, could it?

HAIL TO THE HOST

Thom Yorke made a rare TV appearance on Jonathan Ross' ITV chat show recently, playing a stripped-back version of 'Karma Police'. Watching him was fellow guest Jeremy Kyle. We probably don't need a lie-detector test to work out whether Thom is a fan of his...



"No, Thom, don't do an Atoms For Peace one!"

LEDs NOT

Bill Clinton revealed that he tried to get Led Zeppelin to reform in 2012. Sadly he failed, but he did manage to convince Robert Plant to climb under his desk with a cigar and... [Cut! – Legal Ed].

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GABBA GABBA WK

Punk legend Marky Ramone invites party goon Andrew WK to join his band. **Siân Rowe** meets them in New York

Near to punk's birthplace, CBGB, there's a much newer venue dedicated to rock'n'roll – Santos Party House – owned by the white-wearing party-hard prophet Andrew WK, who bursts through the door at 2pm, sweating profusely. "Sorry I'm late," he pants, reaching behind the bar for water. "I was caught in traffic so I got out the cab and ran to blocks." If he sounds nervy, it's probably because the man he has kept waiting is former Ramones drummer Marky Ramone (real name Marc Bell). Tonight is 33-year-old WK's debut as the frontman of the 56-year-old's Ramones covers band, Blitzkrieg. Taking over from former singer Michale Graves of Misfits, they're soon to embark on a 21-date tour visiting Russia, South America, Europe and the USA.

As a couple, they look hilarious. WK is in trademark white – Nike trainers, grubby jeans and a tee that's gone see-through between the nipples due to his sweat. Marky is in a black vest that shows his 'mom + dad' tattoo, jeans, and studded parent trainers with a high shine to better reflect his black hair. Both are wearing sunglasses, in a dark room.

They paired up in November 2012 when Steve Lewis, a New York nightlife legend and veteran of Studio 54 and nightclub chain The Limelight, was asked by Marky to suggest a new singer. "You don't need to think something like this through," gushes Andrew. They first met at DBGB, a restaurant named in tribute to the famous venue. They bonded over a love of food (Marky sells his Brooklyn's Own line of marinara pasta sauce at the restaurant) and after auditions agreed to work together.

During a walk through Chinatown, they find it hard to stop recommending food spots. They're only interrupted when Marky is stopped by a fan wearing an 'I Wanna Be Sedated' slogan shirt. The Frenchman is on holiday but has tickets for tonight's show. Minutes later a policeman grabs him. "This happens a lot," says his assistant, "police love him." Andrew is almost as awestruck as the fans. "You're representing a lot more than yourself," he says of the night's task. "You're representing the dreams and excitement of thousands. So many folk are obsessed with the Ramones."

Come 9pm, that's the vibe in Santos – that these 34 songs from the Ramones'



Blitzkrieg live at the aptly named Santos Party House, New York



Andrew didn't care that he'd done a little sick down his front



When Marky met a French dude

14 albums still mean as much now as when they were first released. The crowd sings along with Andrew's every growled syllable. By 'I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend', WK's shirt is a slimy grey. Shouts of "Marky!" remind you who the real star is here, though.

Blitzkrieg are a good covers band, and it's still the best way die-hard Ramones fans can hear the songs live. As lifelong fan Jared James says outside, it may not be cool, but these songs still sound great. "It's a great honour as a new New Yorker to see old-school New York meet new-school New York," he says. "This was a passing of the torch."



Andrew and Marky party hard in NYC's Chinatown

ANDREW WK on MARKY RAMONE

"Marky is a real gentleman, really witty and just up for fun. He has more reason than most to value what joys you can get out of life while you are living. He's already been through an intense adventure and that he still loves it means a lot. It was what he was born to do, even if it is challenging or painful."

MARKY RAMONE on ANDREW WK

"I love his party philosophy and how he's very positive. I didn't want a Joey [Ramone] clone in the band, I wanted a guy who had his own style. It just gelled. It's a physical endeavour to do 34 Ramones songs, it's like being an athlete. Is he up to the challenge? Well he says he is, so we'll see..."

NME EXTRA WIN! A PAIR OF URBANEARS HEADPHONES TO LISTEN TO YOUR FAVOURITE MUSIC IN STYLE!

Decorate your ears in a choice of six springtime colours

The sky might be greyer than an old pair of pants outside, but Urbanears are bringing on the sunshine with their coloured headphones, in new shades for spring. They're giving six lucky readers the chance to win a pair of their classic Plattan style in coral, petrol, olive, white, pumpkin or indigo. The Plattan can be handily folded down to the size of your fist for maximum

use on the move. Plus the ZoundPlug on the ear cap means a mate can plug into what you're listening to as well.

HOW TO ENTER

Download and launch a QR reader app for your smartphone, then scan the QR code on this page. You will be redirected to exclusive NME features, info

and video footage. Mobile network and/or Wi-Fi charges may apply. If you haven't got a smartphone, head to NME.COM/win.



GUY EPPLE

TALKING
HEAD

WHY THE BOSTON RAPPER ARREST IS BONKERS

The arrest and threatened prison sentence for teenage American high school student Cameron D'Ambrosio over a rap he posted on Facebook is very bad news for hip-hop, says **Louis Pattison**



Cameron D'Ambrosio is in deep shit. An 18-year-old from Methuen, Massachusetts, he's much like

any other kid from Nowheresville, North America: he skates, spends his evenings "pwning noobs" on *Modern Warfare 2*, and wants to be a rapper, posting his freestyle efforts on his YouTube account. It's the last of these hobbies that has got him in a spot of bother. On May 1, D'Ambrosio is alleged to have posted a rap to Facebook, which one of his fellow students at Methuen High School watched. Shocked by the content, they reported it to the school. Who then called the cops.

Let's let Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon take up the slack. "He posted a threat in the form of rap where he mentioned the White House, the Boston Marathon bombing, and said 'Everybody you will see what I am going to do, kill people,'" the chief told local newspaper *Valley Patriot*. So the police drove to D'Ambrosio's home and picked him up. "I do want to make clear he did not make a specific threat against the school or any particular individuals," admits Solomon. "But the threat was disturbing enough for us to act, and I think our officers did the right thing."

After a good talking to and a slap on the wrist... no, sorry, that's not what happened. D'Ambrosio is being charged with "communicating terroristic threats", punishable with up to 20 years in prison. Bail is set at an eye-watering

\$1 million, and according to Methuen police, their diligent detectives have been issued a search warrant and continue "gathering any and all information that they can".

This, evidently, is bonkers. D'Ambrosio is doubtless not among the brightest minds of his generation, but I'll bet that when the police strip his bedroom and search his hard-drive, the most they're likely to find is a bit of weed and a bunch of Eminem and Odd Future albums swiped off The Pirate Bay.

America is jumpy right now. The gun-control debate is raging, the



The teenager appears in court charged with "communicating terrorist threats"



Cameron posts his raps on Facebook

Boston Marathon bombing has everyone looking for the terrorist in their midst, no-one has quite forgotten the Columbine High School massacre. But the way social media amplifies the message while removing the context has had ramifications on this side of the pond, too. Take Doncaster's Paul Chambers, whose mission to woo a Northern Irish girl was thwarted by snow in early 2010. "Crap!" tweeted the 26-year-old. "Robin Hood airport is closed. You've got a week and a bit to get your shit together otherwise

I'm blowing the airport sky high!" Chambers was arrested at his home by anti-terror police, who apparently believe that all jokes on Twitter must, by law, be appended "#LOL", and was later convicted of "sending a public electronic message of menacing

braggadocio and flights of fantasy. If every US rapper had shotted the drugs they claim, there wouldn't be any space for actual drug dealers. When Kid Rock's dwarf rapper Joe C claimed "he was three foot nine with a 10 foot dick", we all accepted this was not necessarily

a statement of anatomical fact. Yes, going on his YouTube videos, Cameron D'Ambrosio is hardly Tyler, The Creator. But the law doesn't discriminate

If 20 years in the slammer is what the law doles out for an off-colour rhyme, Eminem had better listen to his lawyer

character". He lost his job as a consequence, and the case ground on – at great expense – until the conviction was quashed at the High Court in July 2012. Slow fucking clap all round.

The question the Cameron D'Ambrosio case raises is: what does this mean for hip-hop? Rap has long been a place for splenetic boasts, wild

on quality of flow. If 20 years in the slammer is what the law doles out for an off-colour rhyme, when Eminem returns this year with his eighth studio album, he'd better be listening to his lawyer for once. That, or he'd better make damn sure the CD doesn't fall into the hands of Police Chief Joe Solomon.

PIECES OF ME

ZOOEY DESCHANEL

SHE & HIM

The New Girl actress and one half of She & Him on Mick Jagger's stage moves, The Beatles, and why The Ronettes kick ass

My first album

THE BEATLES - 'A HARD DAY'S NIGHT'

"I was really into The Beatles when I was nine. My dad showed me the movie *A Hard Day's Night* and I loved it. That film is brilliant, it's one of my favourite movies. I think I saved up my money for the record, and it's still my favourite Beatles record. I love later Beatles and everything but, for me, it just has this special significance."

My first gig

THE ROLLING STONES AT THE MEMORIAL COLISEUM, LOS ANGELES, 1989

"It was the Steel Wheels tour. I was nine. Guns N' Roses opened up for them. I did not understand them, being so young. Axl Rose wore butt-less pants. The Rolling Stones were great though. It was a pretty cool first show. I knew certain songs but obviously I wasn't really familiar with the catalogue of music like you are when you're older so I have no idea what they played. I do remember Mick Jagger running around the stage, though. I haven't seen them since but I hear they're really great still, so I'd like to."

The first song I fell in love with
JUDY GARLAND - 'OVER THE RAINBOW'

"When I was two, I saw *The Wizard Of Oz* and became completely obsessed with it. My parents have a video of me singing it when I was two. Coming at a song for the first time, having no history of knowing any songs before, it is a really interesting memory to have. It was the first song I learned the words to. It was difficult but I was determined."

My favourite lyric

COLE PORTER - 'EV'RY TIME WE SAY GOODBYE'

"'There's no love song finer/But how strange the change from major to minor/Every time we say goodbye'. A lot of it is what leads up to it but it's lyric-writing at its best. There's a reference to a love song within the love song and to its own song structure. I think it's really brilliant but it never becomes too clever. It's still a really emotional song. Its cleverness doesn't take away from its emotional quality."

Right now I love
THE BEACH BOYS

"I go through phases but I always love The Beach Boys. Their harmonies, for my musical geek side, are so incredible but the music just makes me feel happy. I can't explain it. I've



always loved them. I think the combination of personalities in the band is really special as well."

My favourite album sleeve
THE FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS - 'HOT BURRITOS! ANTHOLOGY 1969-1972'

"I had it on my wall in my room when I was in high school. It's a pretty great cover. It's got The Flying Burrito Brothers and I think Pamela Des Barres on it. They're all in their nudie suits and it looks like a black-and-white photo that's been coloured in later. It's just one of those things that you stare at a lot."

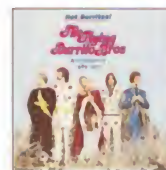
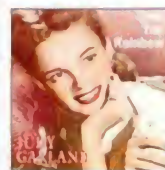
My style icon

ANN-MARGRET

"It changes, but right now I like her a lot. She was naturally sort of sexy but without trying. I try not to dress like anyone but myself but I really admire her style."

My favourite song to DJ
THE RONNETTES - 'BE MY BABY'

"Pretty much everybody likes that song, and when you play it people get really excited. I don't really DJ so much any more. I used to but not any more. However, if I'm at a party, I'll put on a playlist and this is almost always on it."



(Main) Zooey Deschanel
(From top) The Beach Boys; The Ronettes, of 'Be My Baby' fame; Zooey's first gig was Mick Jagger and the Stones; Judy Garland's 'Over The Rainbow'; The Flying Burrito Bros sleeve that Zooey loves; *A Hard Day's Night*



RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS

Edited by Matt Wilkinson



ABOUT
TO
BREAK

DAUGHN GIBSON

Like Roy Orbison by way of Burial, Gibson's brand of glitchy country is wickedly intriguing

It comes as little surprise to find that imposing, gutter-sweeping storyteller Daughn Gibson used to work in a porno bookstore. "It was incredible," he booms down the line from his middle-of-nowhere hometown of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, telling us about lipstick-smears and drag queens and filth-obsessed businessmen regulars. "I think it inspired my whole life – like, pull back the curtain a little bit and see what's inside. That's one of the moments where I became fascinated with the underbelly."

Gibson's new album, the spectacular 'Me Moan', is a genre-pulverising collection of creepy modern murder ballads and damaged, neon-lit Americana. "I gravitate more towards the troubled side of human life," he explains ahead of its July release. "We run around in a virtual smiley face, but really, beneath it there's a lot of troubling details," he adds.

No shit. One particularly sinister song, 'The Pisgee Nest' is, Gibson says bluntly, "about a gang-bang in the woods".

A burly former trucker, Gibson is the first to admit that his music has a fair bit in common with the meth-addled majesty of

Breaking Bad, from the ever-present "tension and menace" of his songs through to the sordid take on the current state of the US. In fact, after indulging in marathon viewing sessions of the show, Gibson would go to the Chicago studio where he crafted his second LP feeling like he was writing songs for lead actor Bryan Cranston's deranged character Walter White.

Yet, despite all the grimness, the follow-up to Gibson's remarkable 2012 debut 'All Hell' – made while he studied for a history degree – has a wicked way with warped, semi-pop sonics, a danceable doom that owes to an obsession with 'Tango In The Night'-era Fleetwood Mac. "Sometimes I would just go back to the studio and tweak melodies to make them feel like a Fleetwood Mac vocal melody makes me feel," he explains.

Gibson will be debuting his all-new backing band this month, bringing an invigorated, louder, "more rocking" live show to London on May 28. "Last year it was just a dude standing in front of his laptop – this year I really just feel like it's gonna be like *Road House*," says Gibson, promising a righteous re-enactment of the cult Patrick Swayze movie's dive-bar insanity. *Leonie Cooper*

NEED TO KNOW

BASED: Carlisle, Pennsylvania
FOR FANS OF: James Blake, Johnny Cash

BUY IT NOW: Debut album 'All Hell' is out now. 'Me Moan' is released via Sub Pop on July 8

BELIEVE IT OR NOT: The new album came about totally by chance. "It was an accident. I listen to country music pretty obsessively and started putting things together and I was five songs in by a couple of weeks."



PULLED APART BY... HOOKWORMS?

MJ and co admit to a hardcore past as they make a start on producing Leeds heavyweights PBAH

RADAR NEWS

At first glance, the head-mashing psych of Leeds newcomers Hookworms and the full-throttle hardcore of Leeds heavyweights Pulled

Apart By Horses may not seem like obvious bedfellows. But Hookworms' singer/guitarist MJ has been producing that very band in his own studio recently, *Radar* can reveal.

MJ has been in demand since Hookworms' debut album 'Pearl Mystic' (which he produced himself) came out earlier this year, and while he's secretive about the other production offers he's had since then, he did let this slip about the PABH news. "We [Hookworms] all come from playing in hardcore bands," he explains, "so it's cool to be doing this now, some heavy stuff. We're just mixing at the moment."

Back on home turf, MJ describes how Hookworms have 'gone pop' on all-new seven-inch single, 'Radio Tokyo'/'On Return', which comes out on May 27 via the Too Pure monthly singles club.

"Radio Tokyo" was intended to be a pop song," he insists. "We still take the influences of The Modern Lovers and '60s psych things, but it's more focused. It was the first recording with our new drummer JN, too."

Ah yes, the band's initials 'thing'. Why, exactly, don't Hookworms like to give their full names to the public?

"Two of the band members work with kids and we don't want them to get in trouble," says MJ. "I know one person who played in a bigger band who lost his job as a teacher because of it. He was spotted in a magazine in an 'interesting' photoshoot scenario involving blood."

It's just as well MJ's producer credit won't take up much space on that new Pulled Apart By Horses album sleeve then, eh? **Jamie Fullerton**



WIN TOO PURE SINGLES CLUB MEMBERSHIP!

Hookworms are releasing their new single on the Too Pure singles club. For £35 a year, members get a seven-inch single by a different band every month. See toopure.com for more info. We've got a year's membership to be won - go to NME.COM/win and answer the question below correctly: *Despite his best efforts, Hookworms' MJ's first name has spilled out onto dark corners of the web. What is it?*

The Buzz

The rundown of the music and scenes breaking forth from the underground this week



1

BALLET SCHOOL

"Everyone should have a 'Berlin period'," says Belfast-born Rosie Blair on her decision to 'do a Bowie' and move to Germany. There, after singing on other producers' tracks (like the DFA-released 'Moon Unit Part Four' by Mogg & Naudascher), she found Michel Collet (guitar) and Louis McGuire (drums), and Ballet School were born. Striking a balance between powerful and elegant, their electro-flecked darkwave pop has an almost timeless, dusty sheen. 'Ghost', their strongest track, is rooted in eerie nostalgia. They've even done a cover of Fleetwood Mac's 'Sara' that paints Rosie as a more anguished Stevie Nicks, except it's so imbued with their own intense spirit, some thought it was a Ballet original. Good going.



2 CIRCA WAVES

Currently sending 98 per cent of London A&Rs into a tailspin, Liverpool's Circa Waves channel bubblegum pop through Kevin Shields' guitar pedals. Landing somewhere in the middle, the demo of 'Young Chasers' rollicks along like a bouncier version of The Strokes' 'Take It Or Leave It'.



3 BABY ALPACA

After sharking his way around NYC's underbelly for the past 12 months, Baby Alpaca finally went overground recently with 'Sea Of Dreams', one of the most atmospheric and alluring tracks we've heard all year. It's taken from his EP, due to be released via Atlas Chair on June 25.



BAND CRUSH

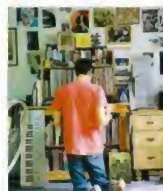


Charli XCX on her favourite new artist

"There's this Bulgarian rapper called Dina. She's just signed with Kitsuné and she's a really, really cool girl. We're playing a show together in Latvia soon with - get this - Craig David as the headliner. How amazing is that gonna be?!"

4 JOHN NEWMAN

You may remember hearing John Newman's soulful, gravely voice on Rudimental's chart-topping dance tunes 'Feel The Love' and 'Not Giving In'. Now the 22-year-old Yorkshire boy has gone solo - no doubt hoping that his Plan B-influenced solo offering 'Love Me Again' will catch on when it hits shelves on June 24.



5 OSCAR

London singer-songwriter Oscar Scheller releases music from his bedroom, but tunes like 'I Don't Care' are destined for much bigger spaces. 'Never Told You' is another low-key treat, Oscar's baritone vocals, reminiscent of Gabriel Bruce, sitting nicely over a breezy beat and heartbroken lyrics.

WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, DAVID RENSHAW, RHIAN DALY, JOSEPH 'JP' PATTERSON PHOTOS: TOM MARTIN, POONER GHANA

RADAR
REVIEW

MS MR

SECONDHAND RAPTURE

RCA VICTOR

The Game Of Thrones-plugging NYC duo cast a melodramatic spell



With the rate at which tasteful indie bands are sidling up to *Game Of Thrones*, we're very close to establishing a whole new sub-genre. Let's call it Westerocks – where tasteful acts with strong Tumblr presences bond over dragon sex, beheadings and brattish, Bieber-esque child kings. The

Hold Steady and Chvrches are halfway there, and now New York duo MS MR join them. Their eerie, Florence-haunted track 'Bones' is being used in one of the promos for the new series of HBO's fantasy juggernaut, and plenty of their debut LP 'Secondhand Rapture' could easily double as the full soundtrack. ...*Thrones* aside, MS MR have already displayed impeccable cred in almost everything they do. When they emerged last year, with the goth Kate Bush feistiness of 'Hurricane', they played along with the bloggish trend for not revealing their identities, letting the tunes (and Tumblrs) do the talking. It turned out the 'MS' in this equation was Lizzy Plapinger, founder of the much-lauded Brooklyn alt.pop boutique label Neon Gold (responsible for crucial early vinyl releases for Marina + The Diamonds, Passion Pit and Icona Pop). Stepping out for her artistic debut – alongside 'MR', aka Max Hershenov – the songs here are pretty faithful to that roster, although MS MR cast a murkier spell with their dreampop and darkwave. This is a melodramatic, full-blooded version of blog-pop; Plapinger's breathless vocals have a detached air of sluggish menace, curling over her partner's pagan-inspired productions. It lives in even more of a fantasy world than Ms Welch, yet manages to nail the art of restraint.

If they can just avoid getting beheaded by an angry knight, they could make it just as big as her. **Dan Martin**

8

DOWNLOAD: 'Hurricane', 'Bones', 'Head Is Not My Home'

5
To SEE

This week's
unmissable new
music shows



CAT BLACK
(above) The Waiting
Room, London,
May 16

ON AND ON
Craufurd Arms
Hotel, Milton Keynes,
May 17

WILD SMILES
60 Million Postcards,
Bournemouth,
May 18

LIFE IN FILM
King Tut's Wah Wah
Hut, Glasgow,
May 21

WIDOWSPEAK
The Musician,
Leicester, May 21



TWIN PEAKS

THE BURLINGTON, CHICAGO TUESDAY, APRIL 30

RADAR
LIVE

Tonight feels like a moment just before a moment. Chicago's Twin Peaks are, by all outward signs, revving the engines on an exceptionally short runway. Within a fortnight of this show, they will open for Deer Tick and Beach Fossils. A few weeks after that, they will see their astonishingly accomplished debut album 'Sunken' reissued on Autumn Tone. And before summer's end, Mom + Pop's Boombox Recordings has promised a brand new single from the not-yet-legal quartet. Did we mention they haven't even entered the studio to record it yet?

Any other band in this position would call tonight's gig – on a Tuesday at a local watering hole that doubles as a venue – something of a dress rehearsal. Taking an informal tally at the set's start, you'd be lucky to crack a dozen people in the audience. But from the second singer Cadien Lake James swoops in from the shadows and grabs the mic, without even pausing to adjust the height for his imposing frame, it's clear that the band

doesn't bother drawing distinctions: there will be no holding back. From start to finish, Twin Peaks play in the present, with James acting as both spiritual guide and focal point for their raucous, reverberated set. By the time the band career into the arresting trifecta of 'Fast Eddie', 'Out Of Commission', and 'Irene', James looks positively out-of-body, huddled over his guitar, convulsing with near-epileptic unrest.

Singer Cadien Lake James convulses with near-epileptic unrest

The last song of the three warrants special mention, because its two-and-a-half minutes sum up everything Twin Peaks do so well: stargazing dreaminess and swooning romanticism delivered with Velvets-like swagger. They might go their entire careers without matching or surpassing it, but since Twin Peaks are still in their teens, they earn the benefit of the doubt. For now, we'll consider 'Irene' – and the entire gig for that matter – one hell of a coming attraction. **Jonathan Garrett**

“THE
ROBOTS
BELONG
TO
EVERYBODY...”





They almost broke the internet just by posting a picture of their helmets. Now their incredible new album will break your mind. **Kevin EG Perry** travels to Bing Crosby's mansion to sip cocktails by the pool with **Daft Punk** PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY

It's Friday night in the Californian desert and the sun has just set on the opening day of the Coachella Festival. In between bands, 80,000 bronzed American hipsters are milling around waiting for something to happen. Then it does. There's a deafening crackle of interference as the screens beside each stage erupt into static. The words 'Transmission Intercepted' flash up. Then that irresistible 'Get Lucky' groove starts. The Daft Punk logo appears in lights before the video cuts to Pharrell Williams singing and Chic's Nile Rodgers playing guitar and – wait – is that the robots themselves as the rhythm section? "Oh shit!" People are sprinting across the fields towards the screens. "No fucking way!" They're trying to point and dance and fumble for their cameras/phones all at the same time. Every one of them has a sloppy grin across their face, including, down the front of the VIP section, the two French mavericks who've just stolen an entire festival without even putting on their helmets.

Why all the excitement? With 1997's 'Homework', 2001's 'Discovery' and 2005's 'Human After All', Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo established themselves as the most innovative dance music producers of their generation. Then, in 2006, they built themselves a huge pyramid which debuted at Coachella before touring the world, coming to Hyde Park in 2007 and revolutionising the way electronic music would be performed live. They made making dance music look easy. Too easy. In their wake came legions of laptop producers capable of following their heroes' formula and nothing more. So the band changed tack. They spent two years writing the score for *Tron: Legacy* with an 85-piece orchestra, and then they disappeared.

Now they're back, with 'Random Access Memories', a record that almost nobody has heard. The band have refused to give a copy to their label. They claim not to have one themselves. They sent one copy off to the factory to get pressed,

and the only others exist in unmarked, locked briefcases that their assistants carry around the globe. I'm the only *NME* writer who was allowed to hear it. It sounded like the score for an '80s sci-fi blockbuster

set in a '70s disco. It sounded like everything at once, and nothing I'd ever heard before.

Two days after that first sighting at Coachella I arrive at Bing Crosby's nearby \$3.5 million estate, where the pair are staying. The front door is open. I let myself in and walk through an opulent living room that opens onto the outdoor pool, where the long-haired Guy-Man is doing lengths in a pair of tiny black shorts. Thomas spots me from the kitchen. He's pouring a bottle of champagne into glasses of Pimm's and wearing an equally small pair of bright blue shorts, a lightweight white shirt and a pair of tinted brown sunglasses that, along with his curly black hair and beard, give him the air of someone running a drug lab on *Miami Vice*. He welcomes me, hands me one of the cocktails he's just made and tells me about their temporary home. "This is the room where JFK and Marilyn Monroe had their affair," he says,

"AT FIRST I THOUGHT EDM WAS JUST ONE GUY, SOME DJ CALLED EDM"

GUY-MAN



Daft Punk 2013:
(l-r) C-3PO,
Metal Mickey

pointing to a bedroom. "There's a lot of history in this house." They might still speak with French accents, but Daft Punk have taken up residence at the heart of the American dream.

The sun is high in the sky and unbearably hot, so we find a shaded spot by the pool and Guy-Man comes straight out of the water to join us, still wearing those short shorts. Not only are Daft Punk human after all, I'm now uniquely placed to confirm they're human all over.

Giving humanity to digital music is what 'Random Access Memories' is all about. Before coming to California I'd spoken to legendary producer Giorgio Moroder, who contributes his life story to one of the album's most groundbreaking tracks, and he'd given me a clue to the pair's intentions: "Thomas told me something interesting. He said that this record is about going back to the roots of dance. He said that with technology you don't have to be a musician or an engineer. You just have to know a little bit about the computer and you can make great songs, but unfortunately they all sound the same."

Thomas and Guy-Man can't help but agree that they wanted to react against the EDM monster they unwittingly helped to create. "It's great to see how influential our records have been," says Thomas. "We're flattered by

the respect we get, but we've been waiting for the last 10 years for some kid to come along and say 'Daft Punk have got it all wrong!' That's what it needs. When we started out it was in opposition to our environment. We were probably partly responsible for creating today's vicious cycle. We want to break it. Technology has made making music, in a really cool way, more accessible to everybody. At the same time it kind of diminishes some of the power of the music. It's like a magic trick when everybody knows how it's done. Can there still be a magician when everyone is a magician?"

Do they listen to Skrillex or Deadmau5? "Deadmau5? No. I wouldn't listen to Deadmau5 for pleasure," says Thomas. "Skrillex we have a lot of respect for. He's said that he saw our live show with the pyramid in 2007 and it made him want to make music, but it feels like he's not copying our formula. He might be the kid that breaks the cycle, but we don't listen to a lot of electronic music. We never did..."

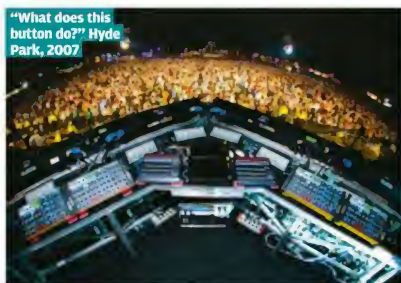
Guy-Man leans back in his chair and gives a Gallic shrug: "I don't know the EDM artists or the albums. At first I thought it was all just one guy, some DJ called EDM."

Because it all sounds the same anyway?

They both crack up. "A little bit, yeah!" says Guy-Man. "Maybe it's just one guy called Eric David Morris," suggests Thomas.



Unveiling the pyramid at Coachella, 2006



"What does this button do?" Hyde Park, 2007



Thomas and Guy-Man almost unmasked, 1997



Helmets polished for the *Tron: Legacy* premiere



La petite maison de Bing Crosby



Stealing the show on the screens at Coachella 2013

Guy-Man continues: "It's high-energy music that's really efficient on the body. It's like an energy drink. It really works, and I totally admit that's what we did at the start. We were playing raves and we wanted that energy when we played. More and more I'm into the emotions that you can get from music. EDM is energy only. It lacks depth. You can have energy in music and dance to it but still have soul."

The irony in all this is that it's taken a pair of robots to point out that contemporary pop music is lacking heart. There's an idea in robotics called the 'uncanny valley'. It says that while we generally like humanoid robots

— C-3PO, say — when a robot looks more like an actual human, while still being slightly off, it freaks us the fuck out.

Thomas argues this is happening to music: "Pop music is into the uncanny valley. For example, take Auto-Tune. Auto-Tune as an effect is very fun. We put it in the same category as the wah-wah pedal. It's pleasing to the ear and creates those funky artefacts, a bit like the clavinet in Stevie Wonder's 'Superstition'. The other use of Auto-Tune is the invisible one, where you put the voices of the performers in and you set the thresholds so you can't hear the Auto-Tune is there. It makes the voice 'perfect'. If you're using it to solve small imperfections you're creating something that isn't human. Would you Auto-Tune Roger Daltrey on 'Tommy'? Or Simon & Garfunkel? It stops being a fun robotic effect and becomes like a clone from some terrifying sci-fi movie." ▶

RANDOMLY ACCESSED MEMORIES

The history of the helmets, from 1985 to 2013

JUNE 1985

Two years before meeting at school, Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo, aged 10 and 11, separately attend the same first gig: Bruce Springsteen's *Born In The USA* tour in Paris.

MAY 1993

Melody Maker reviews a compilation album that includes tracks by Darlin', a band featuring Thomas, Guy-Man and Laurent Brancowitz (now of Phoenix). Their song 'Cindy, So Loud' is described as "a daft punky thrash". The pair used this for their next project.

APRIL 1994

Daft Punk's debut single 'The New Wave' is released on Soma Records, after the pair meet the label's co-founder at a rave at EuroDisney. The track evolves into 'Alive', the version that appears on their first album.

MARCH 2001

Daft Punk release their dance masterpiece 'Discovery'. *NME* gives the record 9/10 and tells readers to "play this orgasmically great record until your brain implodes with joy".

MARCH 2005

'Human After All' is released to a relatively muted response. *NME* gives it 7/10, pointing out that the record "reveals more of what lies in the hearts of its reclusive creators than ever before".

APRIL 2006

Daft Punk's laser-pyramid live show debuts at Coachella before going on to blow people's minds all over the world. A live record of their Paris show, 'Alive 2007', wins the Grammy for Best Electronic/Dance Album in 2009.

DECEMBER 2010

The robot duo score *Tron: Legacy*. Rather than making a purely electronic soundtrack they record with an 85-piece orchestra.

FEBRUARY 2013

The duo post a picture of their new helmets and the Columbia Records logo on their official Facebook and website. The volume of traffic from fans brings the site down.



JANUARY 1997

Their first album 'Homework' is released, featuring the huge singles 'Da Funk' and 'Around The World'. *NME* calls it a "mighty mash-up of a debut which radically redefines France's pop credentials" and awards it 7/10.

Having figured out exactly what sort of music they didn't want to make, Daft Punk were also acutely aware of the stage of their careers at which they found themselves. "We're music-lovers, and we realised that bands who've been together for 20 years usually don't put out their best records," Thomas explains. "We had to find a way to break that curse." Their answer was to set about recording 'Random Access Memories' with live musicians. Once they'd decided that, the album became one big game of Ultimate Band. They could pick anyone in the world, so who did they want?

They started with Paul Williams, a composer and songwriter who's also the star of their favourite film, *Phantom Of The Paradise*, a kitschy musical horror film from 1974 that mashes up *The Phantom Of The Opera*, *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* and *Faust*. Thomas describes one of the tracks he worked on, the epic, multi-faceted 'Touch', as "the pivotal track on the record".

"'Touch' was the first track we started working on and almost the last to finish because it was the most complex," he explains. The track switches from a crooner's love song to a disco tune to a robot-sung ballad and back again, seemingly at random. "We recorded 250 tracks to make that one song. It's an interesting metaphor for the concept of the album: the similarities between the hard drive and the brain. It's about the random way that memories are 'downloaded' into your train of thought. The most important records in music, whether it's Led Zeppelin or Pink Floyd, or 'The White Album' or 'Sgt Pepper's...', or 'Quadrophonia' or 'Tommy', are the ones that take you on a journey for miles and miles."

As well as Williams, they also brought in Julian Casablancas because they—like everyone else on the planet—always secretly wanted to be in The Strokes. "They're probably our favourite contemporary rock band," says Thomas. "In

"THE ALBUM IS ABOUT THE SIMILARITIES OF THE HARD DRIVE AND THE BRAIN"

THOMAS BANGALTER



Salt and pepper shakers, £34.99 from Argos

terms of the attitude, he's got it totally right. We had a rock band when we were 17 and when we heard The Strokes' first record we went, 'Wow, that's the band we dreamed of being.'"

Guy-Man agrees with a sigh: "If our first band Darlin' had stayed together longer, we would have wanted to be The Strokes."

The band they've chosen to put together for their first single from 'Random Access Memories', however, goes straight back to their love of disco. They've brought Chic guitarist Nile Rodgers together with his spiritual heir, Pharrell Williams. For Daft Punk, recording with Nile at New York's legendary Electric Lady Studios was an android's dream come true. "When we met each other 26 years ago, the first tape we listened to was Jimi Hendrix's 'Electric Ladyland,'" explains Thomas. "Then we were so inspired by Chic records, so when you find yourself recording with Nile Rodgers in Jimi Hendrix's former studio... it's crazy!"

When I speak to Pharrell, he's equally excited to have the chance to work with his hero: "I was pleasantly surprised that they got Nile to work on the album because previously I'd been working on music that was imitating him. His playing is exquisite. He's just a genius."

As for Daft Punk, Pharrell refuses to believe they're anything but the robotic pioneers they appear to be: "I'm excited for the robots, man. They deserve it. Those guys are super-rare. I'm thankful to just be a digit in their equation."

Another suggestion that Daft Punk might really be from another world comes in the album's final track, 'Contact', which samples NASA recordings from Apollo 17 and sounds not unlike a huge pyramid blasting into space. Over piña colodas by the pool, collaborator DJ Falcon tells the story of the moment they finished it: "When we came to finally listen to the finished track in the studio we could feel

OUR FRIENDS ELECTRIC: DAFT PUNK ON THEIR COLLABORATORS

The dream line-up brought together for 'RAM' by Thomas and Guy-Man

PHARRELL WILLIAMS



The face of Daft Punk's comeback single 'Get Lucky' is the unfeasibly cool 40-year-old NERD frontman and member of production duo The Neptunes.

DAFT PUNK SAY: "As a performer and as a human being he is someone who we consider to be extremely special. It felt like a perfect match for creating this band with Nile and the robots."

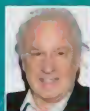
NILE RODGERS



Disco legend whose production credits include everything from 'Le Freak' by Chic to 'Like A Virgin' by Madonna, 'Let's Dance' by David Bowie to 'We Are Family' by Sister Sledge. Plays a guitar called 'The Hitmaker'.

DAFT PUNK SAY: "We've been so inspired by Nile Rodgers and Chic. Having him play guitar for us was just totally trippy."

GIORGIO MORODER



Renowned producer who created huge disco floorfillers such as Donna Summer's 'I Feel Love' as well as the soundtracks for a host of '80s movie blockbusters, including *Scarface*.

DAFT PUNK SAY: "He started playing easy-listening music in hotels, then German pop, then Donna Summer, then disco and Hollywood. He's always inspired us."

JULIAN CASABLANCAS



After this year's new Strokes album 'Comedown Machine', the New York frontman continues his '80s love affair on a Daft Punk track called 'Instant Crush'.

DAFT PUNK SAY: "It was great to see with Julian how mutual that respect and admiration was. He loved our music in the way that we loved his, so it felt like a very equal situation."



the intensity the noise was causing. Right at the end of the track, the speakers in the studio blew out! I'm talking like one second left. That's the end of the album! It was such a rock'n'roll vibe, like smashing your guitar at the end of the show. The studio was fucked up, but we just smiled at each other and said, 'Fuck that! We closed the door on the studio and went home.'

With the record finished, the band's attention turned to the slow process of unveiling it to the world. They've managed to keep the record shrouded in the sort of secrecy that makes David Bowie seem chatty. "We're throwing a surprise party," explains Thomas, "so we don't want it to be spoiled. The record company doesn't have the record. We don't have the record. Our friends don't have the record. It just sits in a factory somewhere and in a few briefcases that are travelling round to play to journalists. The scenario is a little James Bond, but it's fun."

The same goes for their robot alter-egos and the anonymity they have no desire to lose. Anyone can be famous, but it takes a special sort of person to be a superhero. "We don't have an ego about wanting everyone to know who we are," says Thomas. "It's like we have superpowers but nobody knows who we are. We've created something world-famous, and at the same time we're anonymous. Seven years ago when we did that tour it felt like the robots became bigger than ourselves. We try to direct them, but they belong to everybody."

With the subject of touring in the air, it seems like the time to press them on whether they have any plans to climb back inside that pyramid. They both shrug. "Not any time soon," says Thomas. "We want to focus attention on the record itself, but also the nature of this record makes it not really possible



to tour it. Maybe in the future we'll have the ability to add some of these songs into our repertoire, whether in the way we have in the past or in different ways – but that's something we'll experiment with in the future."

Could they tour with a live band? "We haven't thought about it."

Guy-Man steps in, a little exasperated: "Even our friends are asking us when we are going to be touring! They haven't even heard the album yet! The record is full of so much stuff. There's a lot to digest. You can live with it for a longer period of time than you would with another album. Touring will come later."

For now, the only people who've heard this music live are some video extras who got very lucky. When I speak to Nile Rodgers, he says it's that moment he can't forget: "It moved me in a way I've only been moved a couple of times before. When we first played 'Let's Dance' and 'Good Times' for a room full of strangers, and I saw their reaction. When I first heard Diana Ross outside of a recording studio, in a nightclub. People responded in a visceral, primal, spiritual way. Doing the music video for the next Daft Punk single, after days of shooting, when we finally did the first full playback from beginning to end it was the first time the extras heard it. They were weeping. I was crying too! I'd been up onstage jamming my butt off, and they were all into it, but then I went from Mr Riff Machine to welling up and saying, 'I understand how you feel, guys...'. It was funny and it was sweet and it was wonderful."

"It was special," agrees Thomas. "It's funny, because it was in that context where no-one's heard anything and then you have 150 people together hearing it for the first time."

Right now, the whole planet seems desperate for that moment. Having been teased for so long, 'Get Lucky' broke Spotify's streaming records and jumped to the top of worldwide charts the moment it was released in full. In an age where almost all music is just a click away, everyone wants what they can't find.

Thomas smiles: "It's the same for a musician. When music is easy to make it's not as exciting. Some of these pop tracks right now aren't just a click away to hear, they're a click away to create. In the end, whether people like this record or not, the way we've made it has been unique."

We've been talking for a couple of hours, and it's time for lunch. The band's friends and collaborators have slowly been arriving and diving into the pool, while a barman has taken up his station mixing more piña coladas. Most importantly, a publicist has produced an unmarked, locked briefcase. After we eat, Thomas and Guy-Man go back to plotting how they'll reveal their remaining secrets. Their work is never over. Then someone asks me the question I've been hoping to hear all day. The question we're all waiting for: "So, do you wanna listen to the record?"

Turn to page 44 for NME's verdict on 'Random Access Memories'

ROBOT FUEL: DAFT PUNK'S DRINKS

Spice up your 'RAM' with some rum

DAFT PIMM'S ROYALE

What could be more decadent than Pimm's and Champagne?

INGREDIENTS

• 4cl Pimm's No 1 • 9cl Brut Champagne • Cucumber, sliced • Orange, sliced • Strawberry, quartered • Mint garnish

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Combine Pimm's, fruits, and cucumber into a glass
- 2 Top with Champagne
- 3 Drink
- 4 Make another, but harder, better, faster and stronger



PUNK PINA COLADA

Forever associated with the '80s thanks to Rupert Holmes' hit 'Escape (The Piña Colada Song)'.

INGREDIENTS

• 3cl White rum • 9cl Pineapple juice • 3cl Coconut milk

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Blend ingredients together
- 2 Blend again
- 3 Blend one more time
- 4 Garnish with cocktail cherry
- 5 Drink by pool
- 6 Stay up all night to get lucky



See next week's NME for full, unedited interviews with Daft Punk collaborators Nile Rodgers and Pharrell Williams.

GOD OF FUCKIN EVERYTHING

Godlike Genius, unmistakable wordsmith and legendary guitar player. Now we can add US conqueror and all-round cosmic guy to **Johnny Marr's** career feats. **Matt Wilkinson** heads to California to catch up with the man himself to talk mind, body, spirit and... Aldous Huxley

PHOTOS: **AARON FARLEY**

Johnny Fuckin Marr" screams the red T-shirt in big, bold capital letters. "I thought this might go down well for the shoot," explains its owner – *NME's* Godlike Genius, Johnny Marr. Stood in the middle of the epic-looking Santa Barbara Bowl (if Peter Jackson ever decided on a move into music videos he'd surely start here), Johnny's quick to relate how pleased he was to log on to Facebook recently and read a barrage of abuse from an irate parent whose kid had come home from a gig clutching the very same tour memento. "I've been wearing mine ever since I saw that," he laughs.

He's in a genial mood today – all hugs and backslaps and genuine excitement about being back on the road. Touring is something Johnny adores, he says, because essentially he's a restless spirit. As he brings his first solo album proper 'The Messenger' to America for the first time, he's as relaxed as ever – squeezing an average 11 of the 12 songs from the album into his 45-minute set, alongside the now-expected smattering of Smiths classics. "I don't think I ever saw a band when I was a kid who played 11 new songs and they'd go down *that* well," he says with an air of disbelief.

Tonight's show backs that up. A double-header with New Order, it sees him receive the same kind of fan adulation that Morrissey notoriously gets in these Latino parts. The following night, when I watch him pack out a Brit-heavy bill at Coachella (Alt-J, Palma Violets and Jake Bugg all play the same stage but receive much less fanfare), the devotion is stepped up even more. Fittingly, Johnny starts the gig with a red rose gripped between his teeth as he thrashes out the riff to soul-stomping newie 'The Right Thing Right'. By the end of Smiths anthem 'How Soon Is

Now?' he's raised his white Fender signature guitar above his head, balancing it there for a good minute with his eyes clenched shut as the audience chant the words from the "Johnny Fuckin Marr" T-shirt right back at him.

It's an iconic look, I tell him, as we sit down to chat an hour later. "Well, I was finding it hard to put into words what I genuinely felt at the end of the gig. I think it's not right to say something to the audience if it's forced, and it's a way of me being... thankful to my guitar. *I can't believe I said that!* But it's a way of me and my guitar putting a full-stop to the night without me being really corny. I just can't put it into words. As you've just heard!"

Is this the fabled "cosmic Johnny Marr" persona coming out, I wonder? Johnny looks slightly aghast. "Noel Gallagher said that, didn't he? Told everybody I'm

a cosmic guy. Maybe he's right, Noel's smart..."

It's certainly clear that Johnny's someone with a penchant for Zen. But he's got a brilliantly split personality, too. Away from the calm exterior (he spends much of our chat stretched out across the sofa), he still clings vehemently to his punk values – he was 13 when the Sex Pistols' masterpiece 'Anarchy In The UK' landed in 1976 and still wears his chipped nail varnish as proudly as he does the chips on his shoulder (everything from the government to hipsters to album reviewers who don't get it come under fire today). It's a curious mix, and not one you could easily attribute to any of his Brit-rock contemporaries.

***NME:* You're quite the pacifist to talk to, to the point where you could be described as being a punk with hippy values. How does that sit with you?**

Johnny: "OK, well, this cosmic thing. I believe in some 'esoteric' concepts, but I have too much respect for science to just go with any kind of bullshit about the ether. I can't stand the New Age mentality. You know, mind, body and spirit: mind, body and wallet. But I am very philosophical, and I definitely believe it's very, very arrogant to only believe in what we can see and take in through our senses. So I do believe in things going on in other dimensions. But I'm by no means a hippy."

You said that with a sense of disdain in your voice.

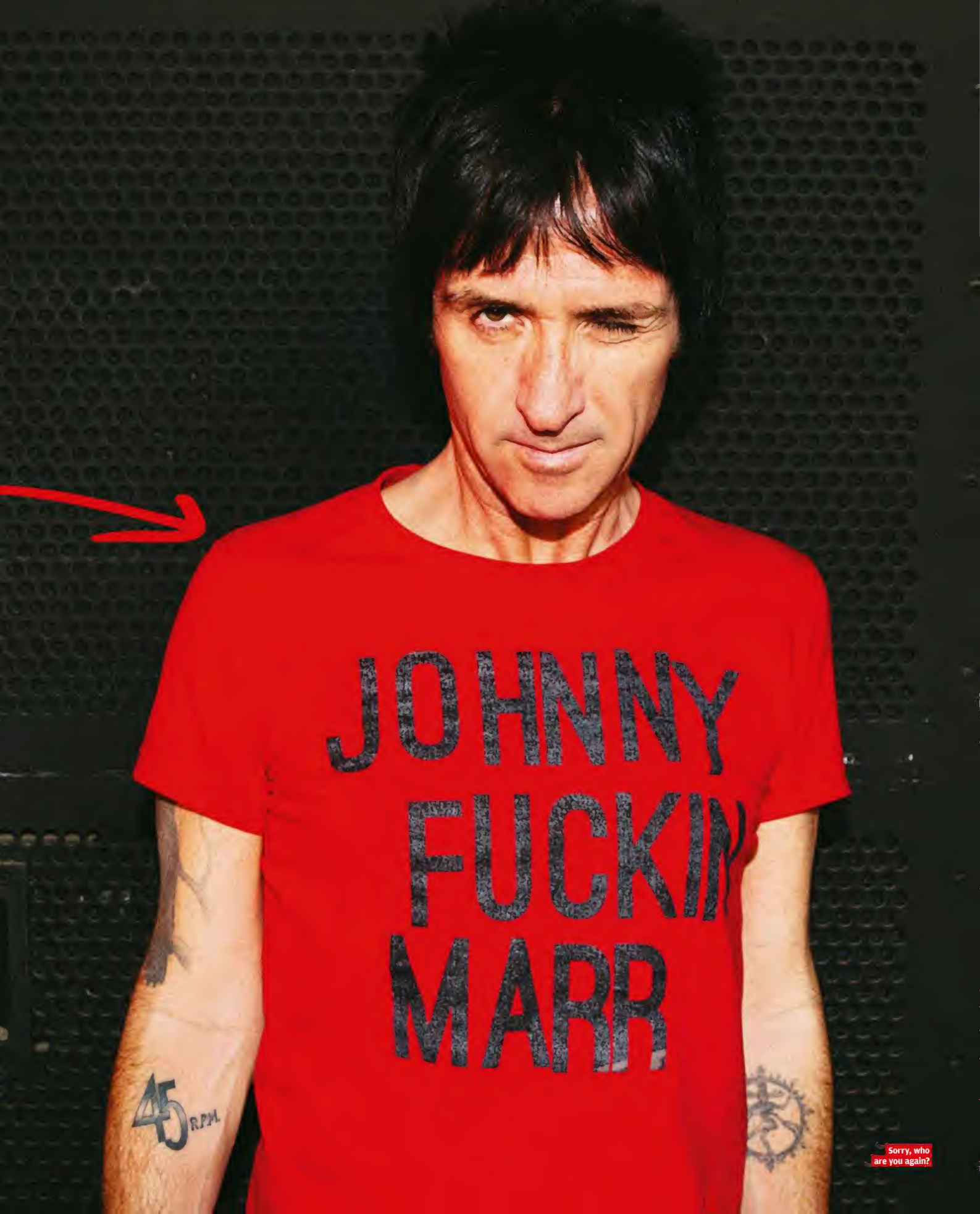
"Well, I've come across too many people who have raised the hippy card as an excuse for all kinds of bullshit. I don't think I can be a hippy 'cos I'm from an Irish working-class family; it just doesn't work. But one

"TOO MANY PEOPLE USE THE HIPPY CARD AS AN EXCUSE FOR BULLSHIT"

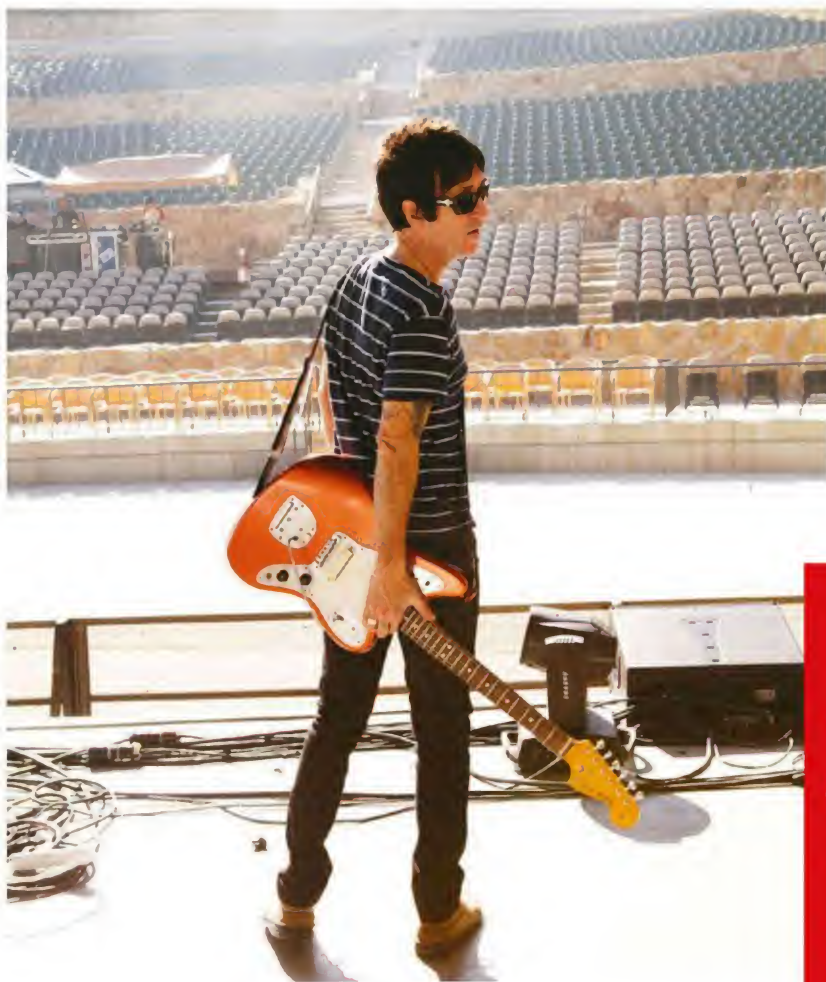
JOHNNY MARR

of the reasons I got hooked on the sound of certain pop records in a way that you can only describe as mystical was because it evoked a feeling of there being another world, or other worlds. And it still does. All the arts do."

A longtime fan of celebrated British novelist Aldous Huxley, Johnny counts the *Brave New World* author's later work as more inspirational than anything. "I think because I like him so much, there's an assumption that I'm more into psychedelia than I am," he says. "Because unfortunately for Aldous Huxley, he's going to be forever associated with psychedelia, when *Brave New World* isn't that. It's actually his lectures towards the end of his life in California that I'm most inspired ▶



Sorry, who
are you again?



Johnny soundchecking for the Santa Barbara Bowl gig and (right) with the actual bums in seats

by, and they're more scientific and intellectual. It's incredible. There's an amazing essay on transcendence, and one on silence, and one on Michelangelo, and one on precious metals, and language. I mean, they're not *all* esoteric, there's stuff about language and knowledge that are really incredible. Unfortunately, pop culture hijacked his book *The Doors Of Perception* and it became all about that. Poor guy."

It's hard not to think of Johnny's own past with The Smiths at this point. He was 23 when they split, and he's not shy about admitting that when he first got hooked on Huxley, he saw much in common with the way he dealt with his own early prominence.

"I think you have to have a strong sense of remembering why you're doing what you do. I don't know if it's of any interest to anyone, but when I discovered what Huxley was about, and that he was known for having a certain stance and having achieved so much up until the middle of his life, and then he did an about-turn and did *greater* things in the second half, I naturally found someone I could relate to. Because for a long time I was defined by what I did when I was younger. So yeah, I relate to it."

Away from Huxley and the mystics of pop, Johnny's other big thing is, er, nightdriving. Ever seen a crazy motherfucker playing The Velvet Underground really loud while racing down England's country lanes at 2am? That's probably Johnny. He's been doing it for years now, but it's only thanks to his tweets (sample: "Can't a guy go out for a drive to visit

a church while playing some Cramps to badgers without people assuming he's on something?") that it's come to light.

"Oh, you read the Twitter thing? That was when I went to Kent a few weeks ago – that was freaky, man! Yeah, well, we took off for a drive about 10.30, 11pm, because I like to get out of hotels. I find them to be not very interesting, and so I usually rope a mate into taking me out on a drive. And if it starts getting a bit funny, that to me is what Twitter's all about. It's got me in trouble once or twice, and this amazing thing happens where you get a ton of people replying back going, 'Fucking hell! Johnny Marr's right on one tonight, have you been on the beer tonight, Johnny?!... 'Look, Johnny Marr's live tweeting, I think he's had one too many ales! I'll have whatever you're smoking Johnny'. And usually what I'm saying has just *happened*. So I'm quite surprised that people are so straight. But I've always just taken off and headed out to Brighton or wherever and slept in the car, or checked in at some little hotel. I guess it helps me with getting revved up for writing words, writing lyrics."

As keen a wordsmith as he is a guitarist these days, Johnny doesn't pause for a second when asked about the most important trait for a lyricist to have.

"To make comments but not complaints," he responds. He's all about connecting with fans, he says, because "I want the

PRAISE THE DJ!

What's on Johnny's iPod right now?

YEAH YEAH YEAHS

"Their new record is great, although that's no surprise. Nick Zinner is one of my favourite musicians ever, because he has the knack of being a definitive New Yorker but with a great sense of British music as well.

And Karen is now one of the best performers around, bar none."

MERCHANDISE

"They could be great in the future – I've heard a few of the tracks from their last album and they're brilliant. When I last saw Seymour Stein [legendary US label head who signed Madonna and The Smiths], who's now in his late seventies, he was asking me about Merchandise. I'm serious!"

HOODED FANG

"I'm a fan of theirs but because they sent me the CD themselves I don't know any of the titles, which is annoying. But I've been playing it quite a lot recently and I really rate it."

HAIM

"I hope their new record's going to be a good one. It should be, going on what I've heard by them so far!"

people who like what I like to feel like they're on the same page". Take the fiery anthem "The Right Thing Right", from *The Messenger*: "To some people it might just sound like a modern soul chant, but actually I'm saying that rather than make a complaint, I know I'm a target for crass consumerism. And because I'm aware of it I've got the right attitude."

That's a great example of classic pop subversion: the songwriter dresses up a big, radio-friendly tune – which can connect with everyone on a basic level – with something deeper when you scratch the surface.

"Yeah! That's where the empowerment comes in. It's the same with 'Upstarts'. It might sound like a dumb pop song for schoolkids, but it actually has a very self-aware idea of defiance."

There's a similar streak of defiance that runs through Johnny himself, from the way he talks in interviews, to the insistence on not chucking Slash-style solos into his songs (*ever*), to his clothes and even the control he has over his photoshoots. He's a master at suggesting little nuances that almost always end up making the shots better.

All this makes him seem like he's in complete control of his destiny. He's been in music long enough to know how to deal with naysayers, but it still bothers him, he admits, when people miss the point of what he's about. "I don't usually give a fuck about this, but I had a couple of digs because of the ['Upstarts'] lyric – "*The underground is overground/The overground will pull you down*" – like it was some lazy, trite lyric. And I'm not pretending that it's profound, but that was cited a couple of times in some lazy, lazy articles as a criticism of some banal lyricism. Well, I actually do believe that the underground was completely co-opted by members of Parliament listening to fucking decent pop bands. And that interesting culture always just gets co-opted by the straight world."

That song seems to be a love letter to new bands, about how to play the game in 2013.

"Exactly. It's like, fuck you! I want the bands I like to *not* be liked by politicians and wankers. I want cool bands to be liked by cool people, and I don't want them dragging me down, either. That's what that lyric was about."

How did it feel to read people slagging it off? "At first galling, then amusing," he says, smiling. "There's that split personality again – the fiery spirit of a man who's never lost his sense of urgency, clashing head-on with a disciple of pop music who more than likely takes ethics tips off the Dalai Lama."

"I'm a pretty idealistic person," he muses before heading off to another state for his next show. "I like over-achievers with something to say the best." Takes one to know one, Johnny...



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Their debut album is a lesson in raw intensity, they exert complete command over everything they do and they don't give a shit if you, us, or anyone else likes them. **Barry Nicolson** meets **Savages**...

Hood pulled tightly over her head, Jehnny Beth lies sleeping – or perhaps ‘dormant’ is a more appropriate word – on a couch in the Queens Social Club, a small Sheffield venue straight out of *Phoenix Nights*, the kind of cigarette-yellowed establishment you can imagine a young Peter Hook being

thrown out of in the late '70s. It's only the first night of Savages' UK tour, but already the band's wan and unwaveringly intense frontwoman is exhausted, not just by her performance, or the five-hour ordeal it took to get here (the tyres of their van were mysteriously slashed last night), but from one of the splitting migraines she occasionally suffers from.

An older fan, who's been watching the band load out, walks over and tries to congratulate her on the show. “Just leave her be, mate,” he's told, as the limits of everyone's politeness draw near. But it's too late: Jehnny wakes up and stares helplessly back at him while he talks, before forcing her lips into a thin smile and silently wilting back onto the couch.

Lacking in tact he may be, but you can understand the impulse: in an age of vapidness and say-nothingness, Savages' debut album ‘Silence Yourself’ is the kind of record you want to grab and hold close to your heart. From their confrontational live shows to their lyrical preoccupations (porn stars, dead Nazi field marshals, the ceaseless din of the information age) to their stark, monochrome aesthetic, they are a band who have arrived fully formed and ready to be believed in. Often, however, the band members themselves remain at arm's length. At this point, I've been with them for six hours and have made only superficial observations, such as how every item of clothing in bassist Ayse Hassan's suitcase is black, or how drummer Fay Milton seems to be a cheerful anomaly in this band of wraiths and strays.

One thing I can be certain of, however, is their effort to exert absolute control over every aspect of what they do and how they're perceived. ▶

FREAKS

PHOTOS: DAVID EDWARDS

Before even meeting the band, *NME*'s photographer is told that they'll only agree to do posed portraits and live performance shots; no on-the-road japery, no candid backstage snaps, nothing off-guard or unexpected. Upon arrival at the venue, one of the first things I notice is a note pinned to the door, which reads: "Our goal is to discover better ways of living and experiencing music. We believe that the use of phones to film and take pictures during a gig prevents all of us from totally immersing ourselves. Let's make this evening special. Silence your phones." (To their credit, the audience complies.) Later on, I'm invited to dinner with the band and their crew, but only on the proviso that I don't take notes on anything they say or do. Not that there's much to report: they spend most of their time laughing at in-jokes I'd have no hope of understanding. Afterwards, the band's press officer comes over to explain all the cloak-and-dagger stuff. "They just like to know when they're 'on' and when they're 'off,'" he says.

Which is fine, but I can't help feeling like a spy in their midst. Savages aren't yet at ease with the press, and certainly not in an uncontrolled, all-access environment like this. Outsiders – particularly those who come bearing Dictaphones – are regarded with, at best, a kind of quiet suspicion. Ultimately, I'm an unknown quantity. It's beginning to become clear why they have a reputation as 'difficult' interviewees, obsessively secretive and given to recording their conversations with journalists. Basically, it's all a bit stressful.

The next day, in Glasgow, the mood has lightened. This might have something to do with the freshly baked cookies and hand-drawn fanzines that have been sent by Thor Harris, percussionist for New York avant-rockers Swans, a band Savages clearly admire. Jehnny seems quite taken with one image in particular. "Look," she grins, our first real interaction since our hesitant introduction 24 hours ago, "this one is a vagina with teeth."

As the day goes on, Savages' icy, austere front begins to thaw. Well, slightly. While they can

"BUZZ AND HYPE GO AGAINST EVERYTHING WE'RE DOING"

JEHNNY BETH



Savages: (l-r) Fay Milton, Ayse Hassan, Jehnny Beth, Gemma Thompson

occasionally seem stand-offish and sometimes begin their answers by saying things like, "It reminds me of a short story I read by Sartre..." they're more often warm and funny and revealing. When guitarist Gemma Thompson elaborates on the band's philosophy of control, it becomes easier to understand why they are the way they are.

"The more people it goes out to," she says, "the more people who become involved, the harder it becomes to hold onto, and to remember what it was actually for. A lot of why we started this, it was about what we wanted to hear and what we wanted to feel. It's very selfish. So as soon as you put it out there... it's like giving away your baby."

One of the people they're trusting with their 'baby' is their manager, John, who's been with Savages for about a year. As someone who also looks after Sigur Rós and once handled PR for Morrissey, he knows a thing or two about groups who, as he puts it, "have a very clear idea of what they want. They're not like other bands who'll do whatever anyone tells them, who might be able to write good songs, but have no vision beyond that. With Savages, it's different. They have their own hermetically sealed little world, and I see it as my job to help them bring that to people without compromising it."

The thing is, more and more people are looking for a way into that world, and Savages' grip on how access is granted is slipping. For the past year, they've had to live with the burden of being a 'buzz' band and, truly, we can't imagine four people less suited to the hype and expectations that come with BBC Sound Of... longlists and the like. To be fair, they've not exactly courted it: they haven't signed to a label ('Silence Yourself' is licensed to Matador through Pop Noire, the small imprint Jehnny runs with Johnny Hostile, her boyfriend, ex-bandmate from John & Jehn, and Savages producer), and up to this point, they've not released an awful lot of music. 'Silence Yourself' ought to quell any lingering doubts as to whether or not Savages are the real deal, but still, the perception of them as studied, contrived flavours-of-the-month hits a raw nerve.

"Those words – buzz, hype – you're using them, but you don't want to use them," says Jehnny, her fierce, unblinking eyes staring directly into mine. "What bugs me is that when people associate those words with Savages, it goes against everything that we're doing. We're working really hard not to treat

SAVAGES' GARDEN OF INFLUENCES

NO WAVE

Gemma: "Savages is about deconstruction, construction and reconstruction, which is kind of the same idea as the No Wave bands who came out of New York in the late '70s [such as James Chance, pictured]. So we tried to put all that together with the name 'Savages'. We wanted that kind of violence, the physical and mental edge-of-chaos."

PHILIP K DICK

Gemma: "A lot of things come up in the media today that Philip K Dick touched upon 30 years ago: remote-controlled drones, advertising, things like that. There's a lot of trying to get away from the planet. It's science-fiction and it's dystopian and it's about man's place in the contemporary world. That was a nice starting point for Savages."

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

Jehnny: "There's this song 'Shivers' that was written by The Birthday Party's guitarist Rowland S Howard. It's a teenage love song and he wrote it because he thought that the character was stupid to be so romantic. But then Nick Cave (pictured) took it and sang it in a crooner style, and the meaning was turned on its head."

Blinding: Savages onstage at Queens Social Club, Sheffield



people like idiots, to give them something that's meaningful. When you use those words, it just becomes something you're force-fed. You're telling people who actually love Savages that they love something which has no meaning. You stop the work we're trying to do from happening. You're stopping something genuine from happening. We're not here to conquer the world. We're just doing what we do."

It's hard to tell whether Jehnny is using the word 'you' to denote me personally, or if it's meant in a wider sense. A little bit of both probably. Regardless, being in Savages seems a very intense experience. They're not all walking around with the weight of the world on their shoulders, but from an outsider's perspective, it doesn't really look like a bundle of laughs.

Fay: "We have a lot of fun."

Gemma: "But we don't do it for fun. I mean, you have to take what you do seriously, but you also have to realise that it's kind of absurd. It's a physical and mental connection that you can find in a lot of things, like sports, or pleasure, or pain, and it's a kind of..."

Jehnny: "Discipline."

Gemma: "Yeah, discipline. It's much more than just fun. When we played the Manchester Fuhrrer Bunker [in May last year], I didn't feel like I enjoyed it. I wanted to get out: we were playing in a wooden cage, there were people all





'Silence Yourself' track-by-track

SHUT UP

The album's opener establishes the idea of 'silencing yourself' from the modern world. It also features an excerpt from John Cassavetes' 1977 film *Opening Night*, about a Broadway actress coming to terms with getting older. The clip was used at Johnny Hostile's suggestion.

I AM HERE

For a record that sounds so coal-black and ascetic, there's a surprising amount of positivity when you dig into the lyrics. This is one of a handful of songs that seems to be about embracing and fulfilling your potential.

CITY'S FULL

Though it's easy to mistake Jehnny's snarling talk of "skinny pretty girls" and "sissy pretty love" as contemptuous, she says it's actually "a frustration song. I compare it in meaning to [Grinderman's] 'No Pussy Blues'. It's about the frustration of seeing people who have potential, but are unable to express it."

STRIFE

Built around a prowling, animalistic guitar line and a crunching Sabbath-like chorus, this twisted tale of "Doing things with you that I would never tell my mum" is about as close as Savages get to a love song.

WAITING FOR A SIGN

Another kind-of love song. Ostensibly about Jehnny's relationship with producer/boyfriend Johnny Hostile, it's another dark and unconventional take on the subject. "I dedicated both 'Strife' and 'Waiting For A Sign' to Johnny," she explains. "You can make of that what you like."

DEAD NATURE

A clanging, atmospheric instrumental, which provides some welcome breathing space on an otherwise relentless record.

but have you ever felt underestimated or been condescended to because of that?

Fay: "Yeah, I read that. It was really interesting. And there were definitely parts of what she wrote that I could directly, immediately relate to. But that's not a fight we're trying to fight."

In truth, it's hard to know how you'd even begin to objectify Savages. Gender never enters into it, even when you're watching them live: their music is about the build-up and discharge of sheer, unrelenting power. Sex is a recurrent lyrical theme, but it's written about from a dark, twisted perspective that

SHE WILL

A song that shares some of the same themes as 'Hit Me', this track is inspired by a friend of Jehnny's, who "finds it funny when people analyse that song, because she feels like they're analysing her... she's like, 'What are they saying about me?!' Again, it's about embracing your potential."

NO FACE

In Jehnny's words, it's "a song of contempt" and one which introduces the theme of facelessness that crops up intermittently on the record. "You have no face! You! Have! No! Face!" already has NME's vote for chorus of the year.

HIT ME

A song sung from the perspective of Belladonna, a real-life porn star who broke down in tears during a 2003 television interview about her experiences in the industry. She later claimed the interview had been selectively edited by TV producers looking for a reason to demonise porn.

HUSBANDS

One half of the band's double A-side debut single, and again, the theme of facelessness crops up. Jehnny describes it as being about "the sense that we're very dispersed as people. We're becoming like smoke, almost: we're not touched by things any more."

MARSHAL DEAR

This eerie, jazzy number is the album's softest moment, yet also its most emotionally intense. Lyrically, Gemma explains, "it's about Field Marshal Rommel, who was part of a German command unit to take out Hitler, which failed. He was very famous and it was difficult for Hitler to execute him outright, so he sent officers to his house saying that if he didn't get into their car and take these cyanide pills, they'd kill his family. He had 15 minutes to do it."



has no room for sentimentality or romance. As Jehnny puts it, "I didn't want to write love songs. We tried to cover a few old Motown classics at one point, and I just couldn't sing them. I don't know why."

During the interview, she tells a story about Neil Young that's only tangentially relevant to the question originally asked, but which nevertheless seems to explain a lot about Savages' worldview. It goes like this: she was listening to 'Live At Massey Hall 1971', the gig at which the 26-year-old Young debuted most of the material that would eventually make up 'Harvest', when she noticed a line in 'Old Man' that referred to the ranch he'd recently bought. "It's not that I was impressed by that," she says. "It's just that I don't know anyone that age who owns a ranch."

Everyone erupts with laughter. But Jehnny, somewhat pointedly, doesn't.

"It's getting harder for artists to build a career and have substantial amounts of money to be able to keep their integrity," she continues, without missing a beat. "Neil Young made no compromises. And our generation is so pressurised. We're asked to compromise so early. It's a hard business, and young artists are easily manipulated because of that. There's a sense of fear: if you don't do this, you won't get that, something terrible will happen to you, you're never gonna survive. You're being asked to compromise even before you're born. Anyway, that's what I was thinking about today..."

The Glasgow show is even more visceral and laser-focused than the previous night's. On the final cymbal crash of the final song, 'Husbands', Fay's drumstick explodes into splinters, a fortuitous little flourish that serves to underline the control-and-release mechanism at the heart of the Savages live experience. As great as 'Silence Yourself' is – and it is a great debut album – this is a band that really has to be experienced live to be properly understood. Afterwards, we hang around for a while to say our goodbyes to the band members, who seem more contented and less frazzled than they did yesterday. Nonetheless, I'm slightly taken aback when Jehnny and Ayse say they actually enjoyed the interview. There are even hugs involved. This is not how I expected things to end.

I hope they mean it, of course. I think they do. But Savages being Savages, I have to entertain the notion that they're simply relieved to see the back of another outsider.



over it, and I felt really claustrophobic. But sometimes, as long as you get a strong feeling of something, it can be as interesting and fulfilling as a really happy experience."

You get compared to a lot of older artists – Joy Division, Siouxsie And The Banshees, The Gun Club, etc. Are those comparisons fair? Do you actually listen to any of them?

Gemma: "Of course! And a lot more. But it's more interesting to us to use references that aren't musical, like Philip K Dick. How I see this band is, it's almost like an idea, and it's just decided to choose the format of guitar, bass and drums. Those are the set confines we have to explore for it to work. There are all these debates about guitar music or indie music, but we find that all very boring."

Grimes recently blogged about the treatment of women in the music industry. Not to focus unduly on the fact that you're all women,

"WHAT POINT IN M

Noah And The Whale have spent years perfecting their lovelorn tales of teen angst, but now album number four (and accompanying film) pulls down the curtain on adolescence. Charlie Fink tells **Mark Beaumont** why it's finally time for him to grow up

PHOTOS: ED MILES

The Death Of Adolescence, scene one: a teenager decides to run away from home in the middle of the night, only to see his father collapse on the porch just as he steps into his girlfriend's getaway car. Standing over him searching frantically for a pulse, his parental protection is lost the second he strikes out on his own:

instant adulthood. Scene two: generations of kids are shipped off to an isolated Teenland and kept there until their inherent hoodie-ness has been brain-wiped out of them and they're mature enough to be trusted in civilised society. Their only salvation? Rock'n'roll.

Sometimes, in Charlie Fink's fervid, filmic imagination, growing up happens real fast.

Though these stories are how he opens *Noah And The Whale's* fourth album 'Heart Of Nowhere' and accompanies it with a self-directed sci-fi film, Charlie's own coming-of-age came just as fast and fluid. When NATW played the Royal Albert Hall last year, Charlie, aged 26, recalled having seen his first ever gig there exactly half of his lifetime ago (Reef, since you ask). The 45-month tour to support 2011's Top 10 breakthrough smash 'Last Night On Earth' saw him finally overcome his early performance anxiety, largely thanks to hearing a lecture by *Being John Malkovich* writer Charlie Kaufman. "He says that the most important thing for a writer is to be honest in their work and what stands in most people is the deep-seated belief that 'I am not interesting'. Don't fight with that, agree and say, 'Maybe

I'm not but I want to give something and this is what I have'."

Coming off the tour, he got home to find a childhood friend and spliff-mate organising his Dublin stag do. It was a wake-up call as loud as a My Bloody Valentine alarm clock. Child-time was over, Fink; wake up and smell the adulthood.

"This is the person I used to get stoned with when

I was a teenager," he says, sipping tea in his stylish new Highbury cottage home, one big slab of overpriced real-estate maturity right there, "so it's weird that the guy is now engaged. It makes me think, 'What point in my life am I at?' and what kind of man I want to be. A lot of people don't grow up on the road. But being around some of those people makes you realise you don't want to be like that."

Having made a second album (2009's 'The First Days Of Spring') wrapped up in the post-teen heartache of his split from Laura Marling, and a third ('Last Night On Earth') about the thrill of the possibilities beyond it, Charlie responded by making a fourth about the end of his artificially extended adolescence and his sense of (belatedly) becoming a man. It mingles the Tom Petty-style '80s storytelling panache of 'Last Night On Earth' with the wistful nostalgia for past relationships that characterised 'The First Days Of Spring'. We hear the story of the title track's tragic runaway teenager (his girlfriend played on record by Anna Calvi) wending his way from rebellious child through pacans to his fading teenage memories of music and romance ('Silver And Gold', 'One More Night') to ultimately becoming an understanding adult. By 'Now Is Exactly The Time' he's full of respect for his parents and hard-bought wisdom – "Offer empathy, don't get lost in pride/Forgive your friends, they are only young". So with this classic coming-of-age tale, is Charlie bidding farewell to his youth?

"For me it's about looking back and drawing a line between who you were and where you are," Charlie explains. "We made three albums which were very different to each other; it was good to make something that finds the thread which binds the three records that made us this band; that connects the dots of the things we've done before. A big part of the record is that transition from the desperate attempt to be free from your parents and to find yourself as your own person and then eventually reaching a more accepting feeling of 'This is who I am, I've inherited these genes'."

"The title track is a parallel to the [Dakota teen killing spree] film *Badlands*," he adds. "I wanted the record to start that way, with a melodramatic story of breaking free. We were in a café in September and Baz Luhrmann's 'Everybody's Free (To Wear Sunscreen)' came on and I hadn't heard it in a decade. There was one line which stood out, something like 'Be careful whose advice you buy, but be patient with those who supply it/Advice is a form of nostalgia, dispensing it is a way of fishing the past'. It was a very sweet lyric and I connected with it."

"It's about accepting that you and your parents have this link whatever your relationship is, that you're their creation and that you are a product of them," he insists. "I think a part of accepting yourself is



MY LIFE AM I AT?"



accepting your family and where you're from."

We live in a time of elongated youth – debt-ridden ex-students live with their parents well into their thirties in the vain hope of ever affording a flat, children are unaffordable until middle-age, mid-life crises now hit in your sixties. Is 26 the average age to start realising what sort of person you're going to be for the rest of your life?

"It's different for everyone, isn't it?" Charlie suggests. "The album is the end of adolescence. It feels like an era where people are more infantilised and your youth lasts longer in a way. I think it's a great thing but also the fact that women are having a bigger role in society, and quite rightly, that men have to adjust to the new evolution in society. I think that maybe men do feel a bit infantilised because their role feels less significant."

What sort of adult have you become, Charlie?

"The person you are isn't easy to define and it's also something that changes all the time. I don't think you're the same person consistently. It's about learning to react to things in a way which represents you when things come up. A lot of growing up is about falling into a trap of feeling shame. Obviously you're going to do things in life which you struggle to relate to in later years. It's more about acceptance than pushing it away."

Charlie's journey to maturity involved some final youthful indulgences. The album was largely written during a team-bonding retreat on Osea Island in the Blackwater Estuary, cut off from the mainland at high tide like *Lord Of The Flies* in lounge suits. And hand in hand with the album he began writing an accompanying film inspired by such arthouse rebel flicks as *Badlands*, *Breaking Away*, *True Romance*, *Brazil* and *Over The Edge*, a Matt Dillon movie about marauding teenage gangs in a soulless US nowhere

Charlie was disappointed with his new 'top of the range' digital camera



town. Charlie's film concerns a sci-fi future where teenagers are shipped off to an island prison-zone to be reprogrammed to return to society as adults. By making a film about a band of teenagers playing one last gig of their youth before their incarceration, is Teenland a metaphor for feeling trapped in your own extended adolescence? A generation forced to grow up too soon?

"I'd like to leave that one open," says Charlie. "The main thing was making a film about memory and friendship. Those were the two main themes and that's what it has in common with the record. I've always thought great sci-fi uses the setting to tell a human story – like *ET* is a story about divorce that happens to have an alien in it and *Let The Right One In* is a love story which happens to have a vampire in it."

Previous NATW records have slaved and pained over the past; now he's making films resembling a micro-budget *Matrix*, is Charlie becoming obsessed with the future? "I'd say I've tried to become obsessed with the present. That's been a big thing for me, to try not to live in the past or the future and try to live in the moment. Part of it is me being quite controlling as a songwriter and being a bit of a perfectionist and letting go of that is a big part of accepting the moment."

'Heart Of Nowhere' expands the freewheelin' highway sounds of 'Last Night On Earth' with a grandeur in keeping with the weekly A Month Of Sundays multimedia premiere shows NATW will play at the Palace Theatre in London throughout May, and with their future plans to expand their live show into "a marriage of film and music – when we played at the Albert Hall we had this big screen which was divided into sections. We had one song where we played with an orchestra projected onto the screen as our backing orchestra. Tom, our violinist, walked off the stage, into the screen and back out again."

Heart Of Nowhere THE MOVIE



NME'S VERDICT ON Charlie's new short film, screened during their A Month Of Sundays shows in May

In a not too distant future all teenagers approaching maturity are carted off to a secure Alcatraz-style island to be knocked out and have their childhood personalities erased and left blank for a brand new adult to emerge. This used to be called 'going to Glastonbury', but in Charlie Fink's first cinematic project it's portrayed as a level of oppression that leads three young alt.folkers called The Nuclear Toads to escape back into the city to play their last gig and try to get their end away before having all memory of their previous life wiped. Which used to be called 'dropping your iPhone down the bog'.

At first a little confusing (Noah And The Whale as security guards? And who the hell calls their band The Nuclear Toads?), *Heart Of Nowhere* slowly develops a hallucinogenic tone and touching nuances such as scenes where

the band record info about themselves to help them remember who they were when they return as Stepford Bandmates. Ultimately the film, soundtracked by snippets of the album, becomes a moving exploration of transcendent human connection and the rebellious power of rock'n'roll. And don't dismiss the idea of a real-life Teenland out of hand – let's try it out on The Strypes and see how it goes.

Mark Beaumont

7



Charlie's film choices (from top left): *ET*, *Brazil* and *Over The Edge*



NATW's Urby (left) and Charlie star



An Oscar for direction is in the bag

And with the past now firmly behind him, the Future Fink is looking to expand himself beyond mere flesh and bone. "Having spent all this time on the authenticity of the human performance, I now just want to make music which is perfectly in time and perfectly in tune, like a robot!" he exclaims. "I've been making some stuff which is more electronic. I've tried to write songs about design, architecture and buildings."

Mecha-Noah? Maybe Charlie's yet to completely set aside childish things...



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96 HOURS IN THE LIVES OF PEACE

Capping off a tour with a four-night residency would break the most pickled of party animals. But, as **Lisa Wright** finds, **Peace** are more than happy to face the monotony

PHOTOS: DAN DENNISON

What would you do if you were stuck in one place, and every day was exactly the same?" The words of Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*, a man trapped in a constant loop of the same mundane 24 hours, tortured by his past and a lack of any tangible future. Then the answer dawned on him: cause as much trouble as possible and fuck the consequences. The result? A rapid descent into insanity.

Harry Koisser, Sam Koisser, Doug Castle and Dom Boyce of Peace are experiencing their very own *Groundhog Day*: stuck in the same place, living the same near-identical day for the last 96 hours. It's involved a fair share of *déjà vu*, which includes listening to Daft Punk's 'Get Lucky' approximately 300 times (haven't we all though?). Instead of rounding off their biggest headline tour to date with one glorious, celebratory blow-out, the B-Town boys have set up camp at the home of some of their early gigs, Birthdays in east London, for a four-night residency. "The shows are getting bigger and we got a bit freaked out by the idea of only ever doing those gigs," explains singer Harry, clad in paisley, cords and a leather jacket adorned

with a Warhol print of Marilyn Monroe. "I don't know, maybe we're just clinging on to something. When [shows this size] were some of the biggest we could play, they meant so much. I don't feel ready to gloat yet. We've worked hard over the last year and if we did one big show it'd be cool, but this just felt more 'us'." Each night has been sold out for weeks and the roster of support bands (fellow Birmingham pals Superfood, east London lynchpins O Children, super-hyped newcomers Wolf Alice and an as yet unannounced 'special guest') is essentially just a list of the band's mates. Are Peace – perpetual bringers of the party and distinctly un-starry kings of the new surge of hedonistic indie – simply intent on keeping it real? "We're keeping it surreal," grins Harry. "We wanted to do more than four nights. I said it had to be one or 10, but then we met in the middle. We're just gonna bring the carnival vibes. I'm gonna treat it like a festival. I'm camping in London Fields."

The week begins uncharacteristically restrained. After a month on the road, the band are pacing themselves for the week ahead and sloping off to see their respective girlfriends. This from a band who refer to themselves



So Doug, you're dressing to the right these days, then?



using the hashtag "#lads" on Twitter is rather tame. Could this be it for the foursome? Is rock'n'roll taking its toll already? "It doesn't look like there's many people there," frets Doug, peering across the road nervously. "Maybe there's one guy who hates us who's just bought all the tickets to ruin it?" As a matter of fact,

everyone's already downstairs, as Superfood have the venue heaving at near capacity already. Even with only one song available online, it seems the prolific B-Town wave

is showing no signs of abating. "They're the most exciting band I've seen since I watched a YouTube video of us," says Peace drummer Dom from the side. It's either a poor stab at a joke, or a new, inflated sense of ego. Or maybe it's jealousy... "I was astounded that a group of our friends could make a band so good.

"WE'RE BRINGING THE CARNIVAL. WE'RE GONNA BE KEEPING IT SURREAL"

HARRY KOISSER



Incident. May 3.
Did you see anything
suspicious?



Pints of fags
were always
on Peace's rider



Doug: Interrupting
DJ snogs since May 5



Halitosis Hiltmen:
Peace ward off fans

his head in his hands, so before his hangover kicks in, the rest of the band decide it's time to liven things up and head to Ruby's cocktail bar over the road. Here, Harry's anarchic mission continues. Grabbing *NME*'s recent Vaccines giveaway CD from manager Russ's hands, he concludes that tonight's set will solely comprise of Vaccines covers, before loudly singing 'Norgaard' and suggesting they "get the Jam Doughnuts in". Jam Doughnuts, it transpires, are something of a Birmingham delicacy: it's essentially pouring Buckfast and WKD Blue into your mouth at the same time. Sadly before anyone's shipped off to the local off-licence to feed Harry's thirsty liver, it's time to go onstage. The band still manage to churn out the same set as last night, but with a crowd of new faces packed into the venue, they can get away with it: 'Float Forever' is sung back word for word, while 'Wraith' and 'Toxic' sound fully stadium-sized. "This is where we'd normally go off for an encore, but you'll just have to imagine it," slurs Harry as he kicks into 'Bloodshake', this time with the visual aid of three confetti cannons. The added paper explosion is enough for Peace to celebrate tonight, and as the audience file out and Harry twirls into the centre of the dancefloor with bassist Sam and his girlfriend Nancy, he turns and triumphantly announces, "Some magic happened tonight."



Peace's rendition
of 'YMCA' went
down a storm

It's annoying," adds Harry. "I thought I dibs-ed all the good people." Peace themselves are on fine form. The serotonin surge of 'Delicious', 'Follow Baby' and 'Lovesick' (replete with moshpits), '1998 (Delicious)' (full-on circle pits) and the confetti-strewn finale of 'Bloodshake' see the band kick things off with all guns blazing. It's one down, three to go.

Wednesday, early evening, and Harry is trashed. So trashed in fact, that as he swaggers into Birthdays' upstairs bar with a glazed look and a huge pin badge that reads 'I don't need a boyfriend', he feels it necessary to announce that he's "just knocked back a bottle of wine". Moments later, he's slumped in a chair with

Arriving back at the venue on Thursday, it's business as usual. The regulars – Superfood singer Dom and most of the band's significant others – are all out in force, but tonight Mystery Jets singer Blaine Harrison joins the gang. Last night's reasonably early turn-in, it seems, was for a reason: both bands have spent all day rehearsing a cover of 'Get Lucky'. "Apparently Daft Punk take a month to perfect each vocoder sound," says Harry, "but Blaine only has a day and a half." If vocoder anxiety wasn't enough to worry about, Thursday's gig is the worst-attended



Mine's a pint of white wine please



Poledancers in east London are edgier in broad daylight



Peace go (Daft) Punk



Today's special: sautéed Peace with a side of Peace



Bass drums double as toilets for Peace



Gold chainmail is so spring/summer 2013



Harry holds up invisible lion cub Simba to be welcomed by the world

in the band's recent history. The quartet storm through their 50-minute set in typically confident style, but they're greeted with blank looks. "Is everyone alright?" asks Harry after playing 'Higher Than The Sun'. "Does anyone want anything? Just let me know..." Turns out this crowd only want the singles, and it takes 'Wraith' and 'Bloodshake' for anything resembling atmosphere to build. Unlike previous post-gig euphoria, Peace have a lot of expendable energy to kill after the show, so they turn the emptied-out venue into an impromptu party. Harry DJs to the 14 pissed-up friends who remain, playing 'Get Lucky' four times and watching on as a sequin-clad Doug vaults onto the stage, elaborately miming his way through Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway To Heaven' and managing to crowdsurf over three people. Later the band escape to east London pool hall and hipster hangout Efes to obliterate any recollection of their slightly wounded self-esteem.

"We've had a right bloody laugh, but tonight is the one," Harry declares from their usual pre-show pub hangout before the week's final show. "Something we didn't think about is that, when you do something like this, you're

dividing your audience. I thought each gig would kind of be the same, but every night's had a different vibe." Tonight's vibe is a good one – the gig sold out in the first day, perhaps down to the fact that Mystery Jets will be joining them onstage. Playing a set that prompts a full-blown shoutalong, Peace trigger the biggest party of the week. When the two bands re-emerge for an encore – a rendition of 'Get Lucky' performed in cardboard cutouts of the French duo's masks – the room goes crazy. Before the band leave the venue and head to Bloodshake, an indie night dedicated to their single, Harry leaves us with one last grandiose declaration: "I want to do something like this on a bigger level. More days. Bigger venues. Why the hell not?"

Peace may be armed with grand ambitions and bucketloads of adolescent energy, but for now at least, they seem content to play to a sprawling brawl of hipsters and girlfriends. Besides, who really needs the O2 Arena when you've got cardboard masks and Jam Doughnuts?

PEACE'S SETLIST

- Delicious
- Follow Baby
- Lovesick
- Waste Of Paint
- Float Forever
- Higher Than The Sun
 - Toxic
 - Scumbag
 - Wraith
- 1998 (Delicious)
- California Daze
- Bloodshake
- (Plus 'Get Lucky' on Friday)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Who makes up Peace's people?

THE CREW

Manager Russ, tour manager Harry 'Bonefish' Price, merch guy Marcus and sound engineer Andy. All giving it some. Marcus threw up behind the merch stall three times on the first day, while Bonefish was kicked out of Thursday's afterparty for getting his balls out.

THE LADIES

Dom, Doug and Sam's girlfriends loyally came to all four days. Harry's fiancée (he proposed during Palma Violets' DJ set at the NME Awards Tour afterparty) only arrived on Friday, but made up for it by wearing a jacket emblazoned with 'H KOISSER'.

DOM FROM SUPERFOOD

Despite only supporting on Tuesday, Superfood singer Dom showed his face every day. After being jokingly shouted at by Doug for getting a better review than them in a local magazine, perhaps he was just picking up more tips.

VARIOUS BUZZ BANDS

Throughout the week, members of Splashh, Jaws and, of course, all their support bands were to be found loitering in the venue.

PROFESSOR UMBRIDGE FROM HARRY POTTER

OK, so we didn't see her watching the gig, but Imelda Staunton was in the bar upstairs before the show.

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REVIEWS

THE BIG OPINIONS ON THIS WEEK'S IMPORTANT RELEASES

Edited by Tom Howard



DAFT PUNK

RANDOM ACCESS MEMORIES COLUMBIA/DAFT LIFE

The French duo delve into their bulging contact list to create a masterpiece that's ambitious, indulgent and, above all, fun



What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun."

So said the Preacher of Ecclesiastes. And he said it two and a half thousand years ago, which puts people moaning about things sounding like the '80s into perspective.

It's rare to hear a record that doesn't sound like anything you've ever heard, and rarer still to hear one that also puts a smile on your face. How many great bands turn their backs on putting out the same old shit only to release records so calculatingly 'out there' they feel like maths homework? They forget this is supposed to be FUN. Yeah, Radiohead, I'm talking to you.

Daft Punk have enjoyed near-universal acclaim over 20 years and three albums but 'Random Access Memories' is their greatest achievement:

an ambitious masterpiece you can't imagine being made by anyone other than Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo.

Opener 'Give Life Back To Music' sets the tone with guitars that wouldn't have sounded out of place on Giorgio Moroder's *Top Gun* score. It features Chic's Nile Rodgers and Paul Jackson Jr, who played on 'Thriller', so it's as funky as you'd expect. The sound of a happy crowd gurgles in the background. The party's right here.

'The Game Of Love' slips into a slower tempo, as a melancholy android discovers heartbreak. The record is loosely themed around a robot's attempt to become human, and if he needs a guide who better than the producer who gave us Donna

Summer's 'I Feel Love'? 'Giorgio By Moroder' is a documentary of sorts, in which the titular hero narrates his life story. When he describes the beginnings of the disco beat, we hear an insistent click track. When he tells

us that when we create art there are no rules, the music proves him right. It's a life-affirming salute to the power of the imagination.

After this, there's a sea change. Chilly Gonzales plays a 45-second piano solo that takes us into 'Within', marking the transition from the first three tracks. This is a record that's been painstakingly slaved over. The track itself is restrained, as our robot protagonist begins to realise just how much he's yet to understand.

He'll be hard-pressed to catch all of Julian Casablancas' quickfire lyrics on 'Instant Crush', an instant nightclub anthem. 'Lose Yourself To Dance' is paired with 'Get Lucky', representing the album's poppiest moments and featuring the dream team of Nile Rodgers and Pharrell Williams. Sitting between the two is the record's startling centrepiece, 'Touch'. Paul Williams might be best known as a composer for the Muppets, but Daft Punk love him best as Swan, the villainous antihero of operatic horror film *Phantom Of The Paradise*. His background in psychedelic storytelling is put to use on an eight-minute epic that changes shape every time you draw breath.

'Beyond' is another melancholy-hearted collaboration with Paul Williams. 'Motherboard' is a long, spacey instrumental that sounds as if it's somehow melting. 'Fragments Of Time' is a further glorious high in which Todd Edwards describes his time in LA and makes you feel like you're driving a fast car down the west coast of the USA. 'Doin' It Right' features Panda Bear of Animal Collective and is the album's most forward-looking moment; closing track 'Contact' is a DJ Falcon collaboration, and an example of pure musical adrenalin.

By assembling a cast of their favourite musicians and delving into their adolescent memories, Daft Punk have created something as emotionally honest as any singer-songwriter confessional—and a lot more fun to dance to. Go

out and rejoice: there's something new under the sun. *Kevin EG Perry*

10

BEST TRACKS: 'Giorgio By Moroder', 'Touch', 'Contact'

THOMAS BANGALTER ON 'RAM'S' BEST TRACKS

'TOUCH'

"It's in the middle of the record at the point where you're furthest from either shore. It's the idea of retro-futurism, of going back 50 or 80 years or going forward. It's this kind of portal to try and express something."

'CONTACT'

"The Apollo 17 sample on it is in the NASA archive. We can't really comment on it, it's better for people to interpret it however they want. It felt like a great match with the energy and the concept of that track."

'GIORGIO BY MORODER'

"I guess it's another metaphor. We like to do open-ended songs with open-ended lyrics, meanings and roles. As much as it's a homage to Giorgio, it's also about freedom, music creation, life and how things are evolving."



SCOUT NIBLETT

IT'S UP TO EMMA DRAG CITY



Bearded guitar shop employees would no doubt scoff at Scout Niblett's 'technique'. Granted, her guitar/vocal/highly intermittent drumming approach is sparse, but deliberately so: if anyone tries to call this 'lo-fi' or 'outsider music' they're being lazy or dimwitted. 'It's Up To Emma' references both her real name and the single-minded spirit that fuels this sixth album. Songs average about five minutes, and tend to have one simple, good idea that doesn't bear extensive repeating. At its best, though ('Gun', 'All Night Long'), this album compares favourably to Smog, or PJ Harvey at her most skeletal – not least in the confessional lyrical sexuality. **Noel Gardner**

BEST TRACK: 'All Night Long'

6

MAJICAL CLOUDZ

IMPERSONATOR MATADOR



Montreal's Majical Cloudz sound like hookah-smoking hippies, but their second album is focused and weighty, not spaced out. Matthew Otto keeps the production spooky, surrounding Devon Welsh with minimal drones and ghostly backing vocals, which spotlight the gripping lyrics. Death is a recurring theme, and also Welsh's preoccupation with how he conducts his life. 'Mister' finds him fumbling towards self-acceptance and he even doubts his musical abilities on 'Impersonator', but he never seems like a lost cause. On 'Bugs Don't Buzz', when Welsh compares himself and a loved one to cockroaches, you somehow know it's meant as a compliment. Majical Cloudz may be dark, but there's light poking through. **Nick Levine**

BEST TRACK: 'Bugs Don't Buzz'

7

PURE X

CRAWLING UP THE STAIRS MEROK



It's rare to hear a songwriter as open as Nate Grace is on 'Crawling Up The Stairs'. Texan trio Pure X's second album doesn't so much invite you in for a chat as sit you down and stare you in the eye until things get uncomfortable. 'Written In The Slime' and 'Shadows And Lies' sound laced with his DNA, while 'Things In My Head' could rival Grizzly Bear in the polite heartbreak stakes. There are all too few songs like this, though, and that's where the album falls down. While it's interesting to hear Grace pour his heart out on 'All Of The Future (All Of The Past)' in a pained fashion, it makes for a record that doesn't really demand repeated listens. **David Renshaw**

BEST TRACK: 'Things In My Head'

6

DIRTY BEACHES

DRIFTERS/LOVE IS THE DEVIL ZOO MUSIC



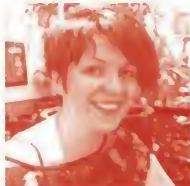
Vancouver-based Alex Zhang Hungtai has focused on the cinematic side of his Dirty Beaches project on this double album. First half 'Drifters' is action packed. 'I Dream In Neon' is a dangerous-sounding minimal take on glam-rock with filtered vocals and starlight twinkles, while 'Belgrade's throbs sound like a car chase from a twisted Guinness advert. Second half 'Love Is The Devil' flits from the dramatic 'Greyhound At Night' to the euphoria of 'I Don't Know How To Find My Way Back To You'. There are magic moments, but the overall effect might make you drift off rather than have you on the edge of your seat. **Siân Rowe**

BEST TRACK: 'Love Is The Devil'

6

FACES TO NAMES...

Three reviewers, three questions



EMILY MACKAY
Favourite track at the moment?

"'You're A Dog' by witty, fitty Irish four-piece Girl Band, who specialise in churning, cheeky grunge in a Pissed Jeans or Part Chimp way."



BARRY NICOLSON
Favourite album at the moment?

"'Savages' 'Silence Yourself'. It's the perfect mix of style, substance and songs about the forced suicide of Field Marshal Rommel."



DAVID RENSHAW
Fest you're most psyched about?

"'Gathering Of The Juggalos In America. There's nothing I like more than painting my face and completely losing my shit to the sweet sounds of Insane Clown Posse."



THE NATIONAL

TROUBLE WILL FIND ME 4AD

How have Brooklyn's gloomiest reacted to becoming a big deal? With their most personal album yet



"When I walk into a room, I do not light it up. FUCK". That's Matt Berninger, The National's lead singer, either mocking his reputation as spokesperson for the dark reality of

modern life or, as he puts it on 'Trouble Will Find Me's lead single 'Demons', going through another 'awkward phase'. After five albums of angst, heartbreak and social inadequacy, The National are no closer to finding peace.

It's understandable, given that 2010's 'High Violet' launched them far away from cult heroes and closer to a band with arena-filling potential, that an uneasy sense of expectation runs through their sixth album. Their previous three – 'Sad Songs For Dirty Lovers', 'Alligator' and 'Boxer' – saw them reach a level of recognition that had seemed unimaginable at the time of 2001's self-titled debut, which was a rudimentary mish-mash of folk balladry and unhinged rock.

But the quintet have grown out of Brooklyn's back rooms – even catching the ear of Barack Obama, who invited them to play at rallies for both of his presidential campaigns – and the music has grown with them. 'Trouble...' is a collection of anthems, full of rich orchestral fanfares, bolstered by the cast and crew of New York's finest. The highlights are St Vincent (on 'Humiliation') and Sharon Van Etten, whose velvet vocals counterbalance Berninger's baritone throughout. Whereas The National's

previous work was a commentary on modern life, this is a soundtrack for the big screen.

The increased spotlight has affected the lyrics too. Berninger's poetic prose has always cast him as a latter-day Morrissey. But while the temptation might be to recoil into metaphor as the inner workings of your head are analysed by a mainstream audience, this is The National's most emotionally open album yet. From 'Don't Swallow The Cap's insomnia-induced paranoia about dying and leaving your children behind to being in a relationship with someone who's emotionally 'Fireproof', at times it feels like voyeurism to listen to it. Buried at the end is 'Pink Rabbits', the band's greatest love song to date, which sees Berninger's vocals shifted higher and backed by an instrumental chorus that lilts from one morose thrum to another. "You didn't see me I was falling apart", he coos. "I was a television version of a person with a broken heart". They're love songs that revel in the beauty and banality of adult relationships.

Detractors will say making music about the minutiae of your own problems is dull or self-indulgent. But for The National's devotees it's the simple fact that their music evokes stories and scenarios that could happen to any of us that's so seductive. They have pulled off another album for the modern age, and its stories live in all of us. **Jenny Stevens**

BEST TRACKS: 'I Should Live In Salt', 'Fireproof', 'Pink Rabbits'

8



CHARLIE BOYER AND THE VOYEURS

CLARIETTA HEAVENLY

Yeah, they sound like Television. And The Modern Lovers. And Buzzcocks. But the Londoners just do it so damn well



Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs released their debut single 'I Watch You' last October. All grinding guitars, rolling organ and frantic drumming, it's as exciting a three-minute

record as you'll have heard all last year. Guitar music dead? No new bands to get excited about? Give it a fucking rest and listen to *this*, will you? Saying that, one song does not a renaissance make, no matter how many riffs, Farfisa organ stabs and frantic drumbeats it may contain. No, rather than signal the onset of a movement, it merely set the bar sky-high for the debut album that followed.

'I Watch You' also laid out Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs' influences in plain sight. Where fellow Heavenly signings Temples and Toy Plough more psychedelic furrows – they're like normal furrows but multi-coloured – CBATV don't look back as far as that. It's not America's West Coast in 1966 they long for. Their Year Zero is the altogether scuzzier, down-and-dirty New York bar scene of 1975.

If Boyer's snipped vocal delivery didn't give the Television/Modern Lovers/Richard Hell & The Voidoids-loving game away, the fact the song sounds like Jonathan Richman's 'Roadrunner' definitely did. That said, there's a defiantly English edge to 'Clarietta'. In particular, the way Boyer sings "I feel so dapper in love" on that debut single points to more than a passing appreciation for the Buzzcocks. The rest of the album doesn't stray too far from that formula – American proto-punk

but driven around the M25 a few times. It's as if CBGB has been picked up and transplanted to a London basement.

From the speed at which things have moved for the band – formed in February last year, signed after their first gig – you might gather there's a breakneck pace at which they like to work. Opener 'Things We Be' emphasises this, kicked off by a simple drumbeat and guitar arpeggio, vocals following seconds later. It has all the urgency of a live show, as does gnarled and dog-eared second track 'I've Got A River'. Indeed, 'Clarietta' is at its best with the fuzzy, rough edges left intact. Any lulls in momentum, brief as they are, come when things get too precise or measured, as on 'Go Blow A Gale'. The band may love Television, but they shouldn't try to ape the deadly accuracy of their music. Much better the primal power of 'Clarinet', closer 'The Central Tonne' and album-highlight-cum-mantra-for-life 'Be Glamorous'.

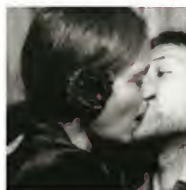
Recorded with Edwyn Collins in London's West Heath Yard Studio, there's a distinct lack of reverb or dressing on the album, giving each of the 11 songs an 'upfront' sound, as if the band are actually in the room with you, singing directly into your head. Not that 'Clarietta' needs any help on that score. It'll be under your skin in no time.

As for meeting that high bar they set? Boyer and his Voyeurs cleared it with daylight to spare. **Andy Welch**

BEST TRACKS: 'I Watch You', 'Be Glamorous', 'I've Got A River'

8

SLEEVE NOTES



Best Sleeve Of The Week

Scout Niblett – 'It's Up To Emma'

Take note, Beady Eye: it's perfectly possible to be saucy without exposing your rude bits. Kudos to Scout Niblett for this slice of lip-locking goodness.

MAGICAL CLOUDZ

IMPERSONATOR

Worst Sleeve Of The Week

Majical Cloudz – 'Impersonator'

Come on. This isn't profound or classy or understated. No-one's gonna say, "Wow! So sparse! Deep." We could all just stick a few words on a bit of paper and then fuck off, you know. You lazy swines.

NANCY ELIZABETH

DANCING THE LEAF LABEL



Singer-songwriter Nancy Elizabeth may sing about being "flat broke" on third album 'Dancing', but it hasn't stopped her accumulating a piano, several guitars and a host of other instruments in the four years since 2009's 'Wrought Iron'. Whether she's actually poverty-stricken or just pretending, the 29-year-old has put together a set of songs so delicate it has all the impact of a flutter of nymph wings. Nancy employs piano as her main instrument and its comparatively weighty timbre provides a much-needed counterpoint to the floatiness of songs like 'Heart' and 'Desire', just about preventing the album from scuttling off on the breeze. **Simon Jay Catling**

BEST TRACK: 'Raven City'

6

BOATS

A FAIRWAY FULL OF MINERS

KILL ROCK STARS



There's no other way of saying it: Mat Klachefsky sings like a girl. If you can warm to his yelping there's plenty to enjoy on Winnipeg indie-poppers Boats' third record: homespun takes on the solemn twinkles of early Arcade Fire; keyboards and vocal harmonies stolen from the department line managed by Mates Of State. The music's studied naivety sugarcoats some sombre messages. "All your friends will turn to shit!" warns the refrain of 'Animated GIFs', one of a number of not-so-veiled death references. Pure melodic thrills for a while, but those with low twee tolerance should steer clear. **Thom Gibbs**

BEST TRACK: 'Great Skulls'

6

HAR MAR SUPERSTAR

BYE BYE 17 CULT



Har Mar Superstar was a man for the early to mid '00s, when his single-entendre R&B earned him a fleeting notoriety, somewhere between electroclash provocateur and indie-rock semi-celebrity. His fifth album, however, is worth a listen. 'Bye Bye 17' ditches raunch and irony for old-fashioned songwriting and something approaching sincerity, and the results are kind of amazing. The likes of 'Lady, You Shot Me', 'Restless Leg' and 'Rhythm Bruises' aren't just pastiches of vintage soul tropes, but genuinely great songs in their own right. Trust us, we're as surprised as anyone. **Barry Nicolson**

BEST TRACK: 'Lady, You Shot Me'

7

JOHN MURRY

THE GRACELESS AGE RUBYWORKS



This Tupelo, Mississippi singer-songwriter may only just be making his debut, but he doesn't give the impression of being green

– opening track 'The Ballad Of The Pajama Kid' sounds like a grizzled blues band playing 'Knocking On Heaven's Door'. The spirit of America runs through these tracks like a dusty railroad track, as slide guitars weep, fuzzed-up solos squeal and Murry issues vocals in Marlboro-ravaged tones. Better tracks, like 'Southern Sky', add fuzzed-up guitar to the mix too. It's a well-crafted debut from a worthy new artist, but it's competent rather than compelling. **Dan Stubbs**

BEST TRACK: 'Southern Sky'

6



WISH TO SCREAM ISLAND

Camdenites' jaunt to LA fails to spark enough good ideas



The first seeds of doubt come within 0.5 seconds. Before Tribes even play a note of opener 'Dancehall', we hear singer Johnny Lloyd's deflated intonation. "Right," he sighs, as if psyching himself up for another day of graft down the mines. It's a brief glimpse of an album that's characterised by a lack of ideas, effort or, fundamentally, any kind of love for what they're creating.

Tribes have never been innovative suppliers of Shakespearean eloquence or Radiohead-style boundary-pushing, but their flaws were almost their biggest asset. Their 2012 debut, 'Baby', was big and brash and obvious. It was a sneering critic's worst nightmare. It was called bloody 'Baby' for goodness' sake. But in its everyman anthems and beery epics there was something gloriously celebratory. It set Tribes up as a band that weren't elitist or needlessly tricky, and who revelled in the community and spirit of music and prioritised feeling over thinking. 'Wish To ScreaM' certainly doesn't overthink matters. Almost the entire record sounds as though Tribes are simply ticking boxes, as though they've boiled down the ingredients of 'rock'n'roll songwriting' to a simple checklist of riffs and song structures and forgotten that it all means nothing unless it actually has a bit of heart.

The quartet abandoned their native Camden to record in the sun'n'surf paradise of LA, and

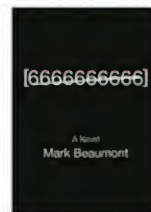
the location shines through in abundance. Where there was grit, now there is hollow gloss – or, perhaps worse, gloss hollowly masquerading as grit. 'Dancehall' is a poor man's 'Corner Of An English Field', replacing soaring highs and a genuine emotional backstory with a chugging chorus and clichéd lyrics about a girl who's like a "gypsy queen", "a fast car" and "a movie star". 'Never Heard Of Graceland' is full of crescendos and even employs a gospel choir to set the 'epic' dial up to 11, but fails to actually say anything. "Standing up to go nowhere/Screaming like you just don't care", wails Johnny as if imparting his own 'I have a dream' moment. It just doesn't work. Elsewhere, 'Street Dancing' and 'Looking For Shangri-La' aim for dusty, torch-song Americana but lack the vital depth, and 'Sons And Daughters' has a worrying whiff of Status Quo.

A glimmer of hope arrives in swaggering single 'How The Other Half Live' and stripped-down ballad 'It Never Ends'. The latter comes with an intriguing underwater vocal and provides the sole example of Tribes thinking slightly outside the box. Proof, perhaps, that they do still have something. But the saddest thing about 'Wish To ScreaM' is that for a band loved for their passion, most of it just sounds phoned in. It's hard not to wonder if we had them wrong all along. **Lisa Wright**

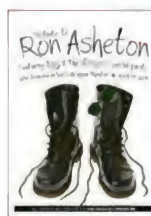
4

BEST TRACKS: 'How The Other Half Live', 'It Never Ends', 'Wrapped Up In A Carpet'

THE RIDER
What we're reading, watching and gawping at this week



E-Book
[6666666666]
Brace yourself: NME legend Mark Beaumont has written his first novel. Early feedback has included "I have to hide it from people on the Tube" and "The first couple of pages are like a smack in the face".
Buy: £4.11, amazon.co.uk



DVD
Tribute To Ron Asheton
Iggy & The Stooges returned to their old Michigan stomping ground in 2011 for this: a sweet'n'snarky tribute gig for guitarist Ron Asheton, who passed away in 2009.
Buy: £11.27, amazon.co.uk



Book
What Presence! The Rock Photography Of Harry Papadopoulos
The Scottish rock snapper worked at now-defunct music mag *Sounds* in the '70s/'80s. This ace tome collects the best of his work.
Buy: £20, birlinn.co.uk

THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

Reviewed by NME's
TOM HOWARD



GOLD PANDA BRAZIL NOTOWN



The one thing this first track from UK producer Gold Panda's second album 'Half Of Where You Live' absolutely doesn't need is a man saying "Brazil" every three seconds over the top of it. It turns what is a dose of hardcore sunshine relaxation into a situation involving wasps, blisters and sweating. Another afternoon ruined.

NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS MERMAIDS BAD SEED LTD



"She was a catch/And we were a match/I was the match that would fire up her snatch". There aren't many men in music who'd get away with an opening lyric like that. Dappy? They'd arrest him. Bob Dylan? People would go "eugh". Robbie Williams? He'd be sent back to the asylum. Nick Cave? An icon of perverted poetry.

OCEAN COLOUR SCENE DOODLE BOOK COOKING VINYL



No shit, this is actually about drawing. "Doodle book with all your friends' names on/Doodle book is what our minds are made of/Doodle all the faces of your loved ones". Piano, trumpets, really basic drums, Simon Fowler singing like he's loving not being famous. It's all kinda joyful.

SAN CISCO FRED ASTAIRE COLUMBIA



In what can only be seen as a tragic side-effect of this country's obsession with celebrity culture, San Cisco frontman Jordi Davieson is convinced the love of his life would be better off with world-famous Broadway dancer Fred Astaire, who's been dead for 26 years. Extra creepy because it comes alongside some super-sickily indie pop. Someone needs a mum hug.

VALERIE JUNE WANNA BE ON YOUR MIND SUNDAY BEST



The Next Big Thing With Smoky Vocals. And why not. Tennessee-born June makes what she calls "organic moonshine roots music", which sounds like, y'know, bullshit. Or something Levi Roots would stick on the front of a bottle of Reggae Reggae sauce. But actually June's tunes are as startling as inhaling a lungful of smoke when the wind suddenly changes as you're sitting around a fire.

PARAMORE STILL INTO YOU FUELED BY RAMEN



When people say Paramore have 'gone pop' what they mean is the trio have become No Doubt. The band's all about frontwoman Hayley Williams now, who's going big on the becoming Gwen Stefani thing with her half-pink, half-red hair and sweet-shop clothes. 'Still Into You' is every bit as radio-conquering as 'Don't Speak', and basically what's happening here is they'll headline Reading and Leeds in 2014.

LIVE

FROM PUBS TO ARENAS,
THE WEEK'S TOP GIGS

Edited by Tom Howard

Miles: he's loving
angels instead



MILES KANE

EMPIRE, MIDDLESBROUGH MONDAY, MAY 6

Is Miles Kane the Robbie Williams of indie? He's definitely entertaining...

If you listen carefully, you might be able to hear a strange rumble coming down the A66 that runs from Middlesbrough to Cumbria. "Don't forget who you are" the chant goes. It's a mantra sickly enough for a Disney film. But tonight is a world away from wide-eyed wonder and talking candlesticks, and the baying bunch of north Yorkshire folk singing back the closing gambit of Miles Kane's set tonight are impressively loud.

Miles Kane has always been a huge hit in the north, and you get the feeling that things are about to kick up a few notches in 2013. Despite debuting large swathes of new tracks from his forthcoming album (also called 'Don't Forget Who You Are'), tonight's atmosphere is rabid throughout. Kane plays seven new tracks in just over an hour, and almost all are cheered like instant classics. He owns this place.

From the second he walks out – wearing a slightly

disappointingly normal get-up of black shirt and trousers with a subtle white stripe (where's the snakeskin, Miles?) – he's every ounce the showman. Part cheeky chappy entertainer, part excitable, revved-up lad, the 27-year-old from the Wirral is the Robbie Williams of indie, a performer who's as psyched to be here as the audience are to have him.

From the repeated yells of "Come on, Middlesbrough!" to Kane's constant gestures to cheer and scream, every second of his time onstage is dedicated to rinsing as much energy from the room as possible. It works.

It helps that Kane's songs are designed to aid this reciprocal bonding. Opener and new offering 'You're Gonna Get

It' repeats its title phrase so often that, by the end, the crowd are yelling it back like an old friend. The same goes for 'Darkness In Our Hearts' and the aforementioned new album's title track. In Miles' world, choruses come big and brash, "love" will always rhyme with "above" and "the night time" will always be "the right time". And though the new tracks 'Better Than That' and 'Taking Over' may run on a slightly more jangly, '60s bent than 'Colour Of The Trap's full-throttle anthemics, these lyrical guidelines still apply. It would be easy to mock all this, but when there's this much excitement

in a room, who cares? Miles Kane is king of the everyman appeal and hey, surely every man can't be wrong. *Lisa Wright*



VIEW FROM THE CROWD GOT LOVE FOR MILES' NEW TUNES?



Haydn, 19, Eston
"Don't Forget Who You Are" was incredible, it was total class. I've seen him five times already, and this is the best time. It's the best gig I've ever seen."



Steph, 20, Middlesbrough
"I'm really looking forward to getting the album now. It's pretty similar sounding, but that's his thing, isn't it? It sounded great tonight though."



Hannah, 21, Middlesbrough
"The new stuff sounds maybe a tiny bit heavier. The crowd were amazing tonight, especially when he came back on for the last song."



MILES SOUNDS OFF ABOUT...

...THE TOUR SO FAR
"We've been playing places we've never really done; we wanted to go off the beaten track. The fans have been having it."

...THE NEW TUNES
"The new songs are all pretty immediate really so they've been going down well."

...BEING A BIGGER DEAL OUTSIDE LONDON
"Gigs in London have always been great and

TOM MARTIN



MAXIMO PARK

JACK DANIEL'S JD.ROOTS, THE CLUNY, NEWCASTLE THURSDAY, MAY 2

A tiny hometown gig, a mighty atmosphere

Going back to your roots can be a good thing, particularly if you haven't dyed your hair in a while, and it's Maximo Park's turn to go back to theirs tonight at Newcastle's much-loved small venue The Cluny. For the quintet, it's a chance to show fans they've lost none of the fire that brought them fame in 2005. The stage is tiny, but the atmosphere's huge.

"The setlist is in tatters," says frontman Paul Smith while holding up what looks like a ripped napkin. It's been destroyed by heat and sweat. Two songs in and everyone's already wondering how Smith manages to keep that bowler hat on his head as he pulls off his scissor-kicks. The hat stays intact, but as the night progresses other items of clothing aren't so lucky. It's been an unusually sunny day in the northeast and Smith's layers are feverishly lost. The tie is ripped from his throat when the riff from 'Graffiti' slams

into action. Then the blazer comes off to 'Books From Boxes', which is played so loud the speakers crackle. Even his shirt is nearly ripped off midway through 'Apply Some Pressure' as he sings "you know that I would love to see you undress".

Smith doesn't need to strip to impress a crowd, they all clearly adore how his tunes sound in this teeny venue anyway. 'A19' gets a rare airing and goes down a storm

Smith doesn't need to strip to impress, his tunes sound great

with the hometown fans, as does 'By The Monument', named after the statue of Earl Grey just metres down the road. "Is everyone still alright?" he asks through a megaphone, before going temporarily deaf in the encore. "Me and Beethoven are in the same club," he jokes, but he doesn't need to sing any more – the crowd are doing it for him. *Simon Butcher*



RICH GILLIGAN, RICHARD JOHNSON



NEON NEON

NATIONAL THEATRE WALES WAREHOUSE, CARDIFF THURSDAY, MAY 2

The five weirdest moments at Gruff Rhys and Boom Bip's immersive theatre show

1 AN ITALIAN COMMUNIST WELCOMES US

Giorgio Feltrinelli, whose life provides the concept for Neon Neon's second LP, joined the Italian Communist Party during WWII. Accordingly, an Italian communist atop a bus instructs fans to enter the industrial warehouse venue. It's dark. There are a lot of security guards in brown coats, and nowhere a Welsh-American synth-rock band might perform. Until a partition is removed, revealing the other half of the venue, and Gruff Rhys and Bryan 'Boom Bip' Hollon clacking typewriters to the strains of 'Praxis Makes Perfect's' title track.

2 GRUFF RHYS DRIVES A CHERRY PICKER

The buoyant, semi-punk 'Mid Century Modern Nightmare' is where the absurdism takes hold. Cast members climb out of 20ft-high filing cabinets. An outsized Anglepoise lamp on wheels rumbles onto the floor, splitting the standing crowd in two. Gruff drives a cherry-picker through the rabble, singing the '80s synth-pop smash 'Dr Zhivago'. Observant Gruff-heads may recognise the placards he brandishes ("APE SHIT", "TAX THE RICH") from his previous live outings.

3 FIDEL CASTRO IS MOCKED

'Hoops With Fidel', the album's most Super Furries-ish turn, is

preceded by a preaching of the Cuban credo by a false-bearded comedy Castro. Similarly, gameshow-style interlude 'Che's Guide To Revolution' is implicitly scornful of Guevara's blood-soaked iconoclasm. Onstage, Gruff cracks a smile when El Che barks at the Italian: "Are you a publisher or are you a revolutionary?"

4 FANS VOTE TO ABOLISH THE MONARCHY

On entering, we are asked to vote on the abolition of the monarchy. As Feltrinelli, killed by his own explosives, is carried from the building by a funeral procession, the Italian communist returns to announce that roughly two-thirds voted YES, before

concluding: "I now declare this place the Republic Of Neon Neon!" This entitles us to one solitary oldie: 'I Lust U', a highlight of 2008's 'Stainless Style'.

5 THE ACTING IS RUBBISH BUT BRILLIANT

The acting, in general, is somewhere between comedic and hammy; dance moves, when they occur, are endearingly stiff-limbed. Observed separately, this isn't especially revolutionary in a musical or theatrical sense. But weaved together over 80 minutes, it's an ambitious triumph. *Noel Gardner*



"For the last time,
I am King Krule,
NOT La Roux!"



Charlie Boyer and two frankly rubbish voyeurs



Melody of Echo Chamber fame spots the bar

LIVE AT LEEDS

VARIOUS VENUES, LEEDS SATURDAY, MAY 4

From sombre soloists and spiteful art-punk to woozy wig-outs and schizophrenic psych, Yorkshire is treated to 24 shit-hot hours of new music. The only problem? Choosing what to see

Nothing challenges temperamental British springtime weather like a multi-venue festival, and putting on a festival that demands a lot of outdoor activity in May shows an admirable dedication to party vibes. Now in its seventh year, Live At Leeds has streamlined its usual two-day line-up into 24 hours of shit-hotness, with an emphasis on quality over quantity. Heavy on new bands, its line-up is a who's who of all the acts likely to make a big noise over the summer. The result is a day so full of choices, prioritising becomes an art in itself.

Kicking off in the early afternoon are Londoners **Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs**. Despite being approximately 348 times better (our maths is a little rusty) than any of the other options in their time slot, the quintet only half-fill the Leeds University Refectory. Still, with Boyer's brilliantly odd, inimitably

spite-ridden vocals and the gargantuan triple-header of 'Be Nice', 'Be Glamorous' and 'Things We Be' (think New York art-punk gone decadently dandy), the quintet are an early festival highlight.

Across town, **Fryars** and **King Krule** are making a back-to-back bid to intensify the mood in the Holy Trinity Church. The former, re-emerging after a brief period of success in 2008, proves that a few years of maturing and learning to sound less like Esser (remember him?) can do wonders. Joined by a live guitarist and bassist, with backing tracks completing the setup, the newly sombre soloist sounds like Gwilym Gold with a James Blake obsession. Krule, meanwhile, packs the venue out for his set. It may have taken a while for the artist formerly known as Zoo Kid to hit his stride, but Archie Marshall's baritone Jamie T-isms are winning out now.

Back in the Refectory, **Splashh** sound like the essence of summer boiled down into one hazy mass of sun-drenched

guitars and odes to love and lazing around. Old favourites 'All I Wanna Do' and 'Vacation' are as blissful as ever, and an extended closer of 'Need It' finds them as capable of a gloriously heavy wig-out as a beatifically woozy love-in. Essentially, the band are the (mostly)

antipodean equivalent of **Swim Deep** and should be revered as such, and it just so happens that the actual Swim Deep are getting a whole lot of love just down the road. Packing out The Cockpit, with a queue stretching down the road, cuts from their forthcoming album sound

VIEW FROM THE CROWD BAND OF THE WEEKEND?



Mark, 25, Leeds
"I've wanted to see Peace for ages and they were wicked. 'In Love' is my album of the year."



Sam, 20, Manchester
"I came down to see The Walkmen, but I actually ended up loving Swim Deep."



Sarah, 22, Leeds
"King Krule. He was great. I didn't think I would get in 'cos it was so busy, but I saw most of it."



Tracy, 20, Coventry
"I loved Swim Deep and Peace. The Cockpit was the best venue by a mile."



Swim-Deep's lifting contest proved to be a highlight



The electric shock improved Darwin Deez's haircut



UMO's Ruban Nielson's style icon? Badly Drawn Boy



AlunaGeorge's version of 'I'm A Little Teapot' needed work

VAMPIRE WEEKEND

THE TROXY, LONDON THURSDAY, MAY 2

The band come alive when they play new stuff – but it's golden oldies that the fans want

It's out with the old and in with the old for Vampire Weekend. Just a few days before the release of the New Yorkers' third album 'Modern Vampires Of The City', they hide a handful of new songs among the favourites tonight, as though fans need reminding what the band are about.

Vampire Weekend have come on since the Mansard roofs, Ralph Lauren polo shirts and long days studying at Columbia University that brought them together. They've updated their outfits to open-necked shirts and jeans, the uniform of every former prep kid, and they've upped the esoteric song references to the power of 10. Their frantic, pogoing pop songs are now a cover for lyrics about being an immigrant ('Ya Hey'), Jesus ('Unbelievers'), and death ('Diane Young'). They've also learned to poke fun at their own academic stylings.

In 'Step', Ezra bends away from the mic and tries to get a call-and-response going with the line, "What you on about?". Which, let's be frank, is what we were all thinking when we were screaming "Blake's got a new face". 'Step' bears all the hallmarks of the modern Vampires. It comes early on

in the set, its steady pace and slippery lyrics speaking of a grown-up band who'll still elbow in a lyrical reference to Modest Mouse, but actually have Modest Mouse round for tea.

"That's not what Vampire Weekend are for," says a girl in the lobby after the show. "They're for bouncing around to." Yeah, and they know it. Koenig said recently that part of the reason they've held off releasing a new album for so long is because they don't want to be one of those bands who you go and see for the hits, and then end up hearing loads of new songs. True, the majority of the set is packed with crowd-pleasers, but Ezra only seems to come alive when he drops his guitar and adopts a boyband purr for the new songs. Maybe when Vampire Weekend are playing whole sets of those, they'll perk up a little bit. *Hazel Sheffield*

VIEW FROM THE CROWD

HOW ARE THE NEW TUNES WORKING OUT FOR YOU?



Pippa Hawkins, 26, Auckland
"I don't think that I've ever been to a gig before where every single person is dancing."



Ed Clarke, 33, London
"I've only heard the singles before now. I thought they sounded a bit droney to be honest."



Samantha Edwards, 23, Perth
"The old stuff sounded really good, but I get that they need to play new stuff."

4 THINGS WE LEARNED AT LIVE AT LEEDS

1 THE 1975: MASSIVE IN LEEDS

"What is that enormous queue stretching around the block to get into The Cockpit?" we think to ourselves. "Is everyone already waiting for Peace?" No, they're actually waiting for The 1975. Only bad things can come from this.

2 CAV FROM SWIM DEEP: DESTRUCTIVE
During the band's set at least 20 beer bottles judder off a ledge

and onto the people below due to the sheer force of Cav's basslines.

3 BOOZE: CHEAPER THAN WATER
In at least two places we went to, it was better value to get drunk than to not. #yolo

4 UNKNOWN MORTAL ORCHESTRA: NICE GUYS

So many people couldn't get into their gig that the band want to schedule another Leeds date to make up for it.

sufficiently lacking in charisma or excitement to make her late-night set anything more than merely pleasant), it seems the real treats have been and gone. Still, when was the last time you saw five world-class acts in a day?

Lisa Wright



The onstage outfits won't give Lady Gaga sleepless nights

Karen O: the TK Maxx sale had come up trumps again



I'LL BE YOUR MIRROR

ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON SATURDAY, MAY 4

Stardust explodes from Karen O's toecaps as a host of fabulous, far-out freaks fly the flag for basement blues, psych-dance and garage rock

Karen O spews glitter from every extremity at will. Bouncing across the stage like an empress in a mirrorball crown, black feather wings and a sparkly sequinned suit, she stamps her foot on a monitor and a flume of ticker-tape and stardust explodes from her toecap. The 21st century Ziggy? With mosquito sunglasses on...

Likewise, the whole I'll Be Your Mirror festival is like a glitter-spew from Karen's brain. Her airy-fairy antics? **Prince Rama**, a psych-dance duo known for

channeling songs from dead pop bands and performing

group exorcisms, get carried around the arena draped in net curtains. Her insane costumery? **King Kahn & The Shrines** play acid-jazz freak-outs dressed as Aztec shamans from space. Her random expletives?

Mick Harvey's eclectic set of Serge Gainsbourg-style Gallic folk includes a song seemingly called 'Requiem For A Cunt'.

And her rock? There's chunks of that *everywhere*.

Dirty Beaches cover the spectral garage side, their guitars replaced with industrial metal-punchers. **The Locust** – dusting off their all-body suits to reform specially for IBYM – provide the noise bursts with their 12-second songs that sound like plague. And while it's nice to see **Jon Spencer** still peddling

his echoey-basement-blues-with-sporadic-yowls-of-BLOOOOZ-EXPLEYOW-SHEERRNN!!! thing without arrest from anti-terrorist units, it's **Black Lips** that sound like

the future of garage-rock. They slick back their quiffs mid-song, invite biker saxophonists onstage and roar through songs made for surfing on oil-slicks.

Put them together and what have you got? K! A! R E! N! O! Spitting fountains of water into the air, donning those mosquito specs for 'Mosquito' and a caving helmet for 'Under The Earth', Karen's star presence has evolved as spectacularly as her band's sonic palette. Dotting new album tunes into a faultless greatest hits set, the **Yeah Yeah Yeahs** vastly outstrip contemporaries like

WHAT TWITTER THOUGHT

@dethink2survive
"Enjoying a bit of Prince Rama at I'll Be Your Mirror. Nicely shaking away the cobwebs of my hangover"

@pearson_justin
"No-one even comes close. The Locust are the best band in the world"

@DressingParlour
"Giant eyeball attack!"

@smokintofu
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The Locust: they even sound like a plague



It's curtains for Prince Rama



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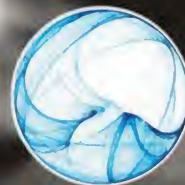
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BABYSHAMBLES

STARTS: Glasgow Barrowland, September 4

DON'T MISS

Behold the return of the Bastion Of Unpredictability: the former Libertine (and Macaulay Culkin's new roomie) is back with Babyshambles for a run of 20 UK gigs this autumn. And, while it's impossible to know just what to expect from the flaky wordsmith, there have been positive signs from Camp Doherty in recent months. Reports suggest he's been meeting up with producer Stephen Street to finally start work on the follow-up to 2007's 'Shutter's Nation', and at their Paris gig last month fans were treated to new track 'Dr No (Sharks In The Water)'. Ooh la la! Their September/October tour, then, should be a cracking opportunity to find out how the new material is shaping up. The tour starts in Glasgow on September 4 and ends in Bournemouth on October 21.



THE VIEW

STARTS: Birmingham O2 Academy, May 24
The Scottish troupe team up with indie club night Propaganda for a run of shows, finishing up at The Picture House, Edinburgh (June 22).



KELIS

STARTS: London Proud Galleries, May 30
After recent single 'Jerk Ribs' and with a new album in the bag, Kelis returns to the UK for the first time in yonks to play this one-off London show.



BLONDIE

STARTS: Nottingham Sherwood Pines, June 14
Debbie Harry and co prepare their green fingers for a run of UK dates which will include shows in Nottingham forests.



WAMPIRE

STARTS: London Shacklewell Arms, June 18
Fresh from the release of debut album 'Curiosity', the Portland duo make a flying visit to the UK for this one-off show.



THE STRYPES

STARTS: Bristol Fleece, June 20
The Irish scamps will be staying out well past bedtime with their seven-date UK jaunt, which ends in Cardiff (August 22).



PAUL WELLER

STARTS: Southampton Guildhall, June 27
The Modfather plays Southampton and Brighton (June 28) before heading to Hard Rock Calling (29) with Kasabian and Miles Kane.



T IN THE PARK

STARTS: Balado, Kinross-shire, July 12-14
Scotland's summer bash adds Jagwar Ma (pictured) and AlunaGeorge to a line-up that includes Johnny Marr, The Killers and Rihanna.



JAPANDROIDS

STARTS: Leeds Brudenell Social Club, July 14
Canada's noisiest and punkiest two-piece will play two shows at London's Dingwells (July 17 & 18) too.



OYA FESTIVAL

STARTS: Middelalderparken, Oslo, August 6-10
Cat Power and Grimes (pictured) are added to the Norwegian festival's bill, joining Blur, Azealia Banks and Tame Impala.



GREEN MAN

STARTS: Glanusk, Wales, August 15-18
British Sea Power (pictured) join the bill for the quaint Welsh festival, which also boasts The Horrors, Fuck Buttons and Band Of Horses.



JAMES BLAKE

STARTS: Glasgow O2 ABC, September 18
Britain's saddest wunderkind hits the road in support of second album 'Overgrown', ending with two London dates (September 25 & 26).



ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES

STARTS: Pontins Holiday Camp, Camber Sands, November 22
The first of two final ATP blowouts (November 22-24) features Dinosaur Jr (pictured) and Television.

PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



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STAG & DAGGER

STARTS: Glasgow, various venues, May 18

NME
PICK

The Great Escape isn't the only band and booze-fest taking place this week: there'll also be the chance to trawl from venue to venue, imbibe booze and gorge on new music at Glasgow's annual Stag & Dagger festival. And with 30-odd bands playing seven venues across the city during the course of just one day, it promises to be a proper good ol' knees-up. Pick of the bunch will be Temples (pictured above), who'll be looking to open up your third eye with their kaleidoscope of woozy, trippy, psych-indebted rock, but there'll also be sets from the dapper man's R&B crooner of choice How To Dress Well, spaced-out slow-jams courtesy of Vondelpark, weirdly wonderful guitar wig-outs from Mac DeMarco and splenetic no-wave from Glasgow residents Divorce. Other names who'll be present for the bash include Bill Ryder-Jones, Phosphorescent, We Were Promised Jetpacks and Filthy Boy.



Everyone's Talking About DEAP VALLY

STARTS: Brighton
Great Escape, May 16
Wild LA denizens Lindsey Troy and Julie Edwards have garnered a reputation for chaos, debauchery and blistering, bluesy rock'n'roll. If you fancy getting caught up in their whiskey-fuelled hurricane before they drop 'Sistrionix' in June, they'll be swinging by Brighton before their journey up to Liverpool.



Don't Miss A\$AP ROCKY

STARTS: O2 Academy Brixton, May 21
Rihanna's had A\$AP Rocky on the leash for months after nabbing him as support for her 'Diamonds' world tour, but now he's shrugged her off and is heading back to the UK on his lonesome for the first time in almost a year. Catch him in London (21, 22) and Birmingham (23), Manchester (25) and Glasgow (26).



Radar Stars WIDOWSPEAK

STARTS: Manchester Deaf Institute, May 19
Brooklyn duo Molly Hamilton and Robert Earl Thomas recorded their most recent album 'Almanac' in a rickety 100-year-old barn in New York – so presumably heading off on this UK jaunt should feel pretty luxurious to them. Immerse yourselves in their pastoral charms in Manchester, Leeds (May 20) and Leicester (21).

WEDNESDAY

May 15

BIRMINGHAM

Bruce Molsky Red Lion
0121 444 7258
Daniel Higgs Hare & Hounds
0870 264 3333
Jane Siberry Glee Club
0870 241 5093

BRIGHTON

Paper Aeroplanes Komedla
01273 647 100
Bristol
Alt-J O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Tesseract/The Algorithm/Enochian
Theory Fleece 0117 945 0996
Virgil And The Accelerators The
Tunnels 0117 929 9008

CAMBRIDGE

Lucy Rose Junction 01223 511511

CARDIFF

Brother & Bones The Moon Club
Dead By April Bogiez 029 2034 1463
Emma Stevens 10 Feet Tall
02920 228883
Rolo Tomassi/Bastions Undertone
029 2022 8883

DERBY

Exhumed/Seprivation/Viscerate
The Hairly Dog

EDINBURGH

Champion Sound Bongo Club
0131 558 7604
Jack Badcock Captain's Bar
01316 682312
The Mavericks Usher Hall
0131 228 1155
People Places Maps Electric Circus
0131 226 4224

EXETER

Midge Ure Phoenix 01392 667080

GATESHEAD

Steve Hackett Sage Arena
0870 703 4555

GLASGOW

Emmylou Harris/Rodney Crowell
Royal Concert Hall 0141 353 8000
Lana Del Rey O2 Academy
0870 477 2000
Mykki Blanco Broadcast
0141 332 7304
Skaters King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
T E Morris Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

LEEDS

MoveOnUp HiFi Club 0113 242 7353
Suuns Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866
Templebys Smokestack 0113 2452222

LEICESTER

The Darlings The Cookie Jar
0116 2531212
The Dead Lay Walting O2 Academy 3
0870 477 2000

LIVERPOOL

Hang The Bastard O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000
Miles Kane Zanzibar 0151 707 0633
Public Service Broadcasting
Kazimier 0871 230 1094
Tinlin Philharmonic Hall
0871 230 1094

LONDON

Adult/Light Asylum XOYO
020 7729 5959
Balthazar Borderline 020 7734 5547
Bambi Rattlesnake Of Angel
020 7354 0471
Binary Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Cub Scouts Water Rats
0207 813 1079
Deirdre Cartwright Vortex Jazz Club
020 7254 6516
Ewert & The Two Dragons Hoxton
Square Bar & Kitchen
020 7613 0709
Fight Like Apes/Gunning For
Tamar/Zoetrope Power Lunches
Arts Café
Hella Better Dancer/Broken

MANCHESTER

Beach Fossils Roadhouse
0161 228 1789
How To Dress Well Whitworth Art
Gallery 0161 275 7450
Matt Berry Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392
Rue Royale Night & Day Café
0161 236 1822
The Specials O2 Apollo
0870 401 8000
Suffocation NQ Live 0161 834 8180
This Is How We Fall Retro Bar
0161 274 4892
The Tricks The Castle 0161 237 9485
Valerie June Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019

MILTON KEYNES

Karine Polwart Stables
01908 280800

NEWCASTLE

Bo Ningen Hoults Yard 0191 265 4282
Dance Gavin Dance Trillians
0191 232 1619

NORWICH

The Fall Waterfront 01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

Ian Siegal The Approach
0115 950 6149

OXFORD

Dick Valentine O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

PORTSMOUTH

Dave O'Higgins Guildhall
023 9282 4355
The Skints Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

SHEFFIELD

Red Jester/Wicca/Lateral Vision/
Drive Through Therapy/Sour
Cherry/Demographic/Midnight
Wire/Bam Morgan O2 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

ST ALBANS

The Moullettes/Levellers Alban
Arena 01727 844 488

SWANSEA

Chas & Dave Grand Theatre
01792 475715

WOLVERHAMPTON

Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash
Robin 2 01902 497860

YORK

Katmen The Duchess 01904 641 413



Mykki Blanco,
Broadcast, Glasgow

THURSDAY

May 16



Klaxons, 02 Academy 2, Oxford

ABERDEEN

Manran Lemon Tree 01224 642230
Midas Fall/T E Morris Café
Drummond 01224 624642

BEDFORD

RDGLDGRN Esquires 01234 340120

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Journey/Whitesnake Odyssey

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BIRMINGHAM

Hang The Bastard Asylum

0121 233 1109

Relicseed Roadhouse 0121 624 2920

Steve Hackett Symphony Hall

0121 780 3333

We Are Lost Boys/The Ocean's Eyes

02 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON

The Great Escape: Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs/Deap Vally/Melody's

Echo Chamber/Merchandise/

Everything Everything/Dreng/

Feathers/Kodaline/We Were

Evergreen/Mac DeMarco Various

venues 0871 230 1094

John Grant St George's Church

01273 279448

Title Fight Concorde 2 01273 673 311

BRISTOL

Allah-Las Exchange 0117 9304538

Arcane Roots Louisiana 0117 926 5978

The Phoenix Foundation Thekla

08713 100000

Songdog Thunderbolt 07791 319 614

The Tame/Evacuees Fleece

0117 945 0996

The Tricks Start The Bus

0117 930 4370

BUCKLEY

Levellers/The Moulettes Tivoli

01244 546201

CAMBRIDGE

Paper Aeroplanes Junction

01223 515111

CARDIFF

Gary Twisted Dempseys

029 2025 2024

EDINBURGH

The Beards Voodoo Rooms

0131 556 7060

Henry Hibbs Captain's Bar

01316 682312

EXETER

Andy Cairns Cavern Club 01392 495 370

GATESHEAD

Emmylou Harris Sage Arena

0870 703 4555

GLASGOW

The Abyssinians 02 ABC2

0141 204 5151

Copper Lungs/Waiting On Jack

Flat O/1 0141 331 6227

Dance Gavin Dance Classic Grand

0141 847 0820

Kevin Montgomery King Tut's Wah

Lana Hut 0141 221 5279

Lana Del Rey SECC 0141 248 3000

Tom Copson Nice'n'Sleazy

0141 333 9637

The Twang/Cast 02 ABC

0870 903 3444

LEEDS

Cecelia Street New Roscoe

0113 246 0778

The Darlings Carpe Diem

0113 243 6264

Matt Berry Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

Night Beats Nation Of Shopkeepers

0113 203 1831

Wolf People Holy Trinity Church

01132 454268

LEICESTER

Bo Ningen 02 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

Ezio Musician 0116 251 0080

LIVERPOOL

The Handsome Family Kazimier

0871 230 1094

LONDON

Alt-J 02 Academy Brixton

0870 477 2000

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Cut Ribbons Old Blue Last

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Den Haag Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

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Islington 0870 477 2000

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Sleeping With Sirens The Forum

020 7344 0044

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020 7403 7730

Tesseract 02 Academy Islington

0870 477 2000

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Unknown Mortal Orchestra Village

Underground 020 7422 7505

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Arms 020 7729 0937

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White Fence Dome 020 7272 8153

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NEWCASTLE

Drop The Ocean 02 Academy

0870 477 2000

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NORWICH

Sheesh Brickmakers 01603 441 118

Then Jerico Waterfront 01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

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OXFORD

Klaxons 02 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Lucy Rose 02 Academy

0870 477 2000

PORTSMOUTH

Pierce The Veil Wedgewood Rooms

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PRESTON

New Model Army 53 Degrees

01772 893 000

SHEFFIELD

Ian Siegal Greystones 0114 266 5599

Public Service Broadcasting

Leadmill 0114 221 2828

The Specials 02 Academy

0870 477 2000

SOUTHAMPTON

Buzzcocks Brook 023 8055 5366

The Computers Soul Cellar

023 8071 0648

Rolo Tomassi Joiners 023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT

Skaters Sugarmill 01782 214 991

ST ALBANS

The Dead Famous Horn 01727853 143

Wolverhampton

Hostile Slade Rooms 0870 320 7000

YORK

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May 17

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Jamie Jones Forum 01224 633336

BEDFORD

Buzzcocks Corn Exchange

01234 269519

BELFAST

Atomic Kitten/B*Witched/911/Sive/

Liberty X Odyssey 028 9073 9074

BIRMINGHAM

Among The Echoes 02 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

Asylum Asylum 0121 233 1109

Balthazar Rainbow 0121 772 8174

Jasper In The Company Of Others

Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

The Phoenix Foundation The

Institute 0844 248 5037

BOURNEMOUTH

Leona Lewis International Centre

0870 111 3000

BRIGHTON

Billy Bragg Dome 01273 709709

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Swim Deep/Temples/

Merchandise/Dreng/Unknown

Mortal Orchestra/RDGLDGRN/

Bipolar Sunshine/Jacco Gardner/

Velociraptor Various venues

0871 230 1094

BRISTOL

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Laid Blak Fiddlers 0117 987 3403

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08713 100000

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0117 945 0996

Riot: Noise Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Seapony Start The Bus 0117 930 4370

The Short Stories Stag & Hounds

0117 929 7048

Sleeping With Sirens/The Word

Alive 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

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029 2023 2199

Sild Millennium Centre 029 2063 6464

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Virgil & The Accelerators Flowerpot

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Manran Queen's Hall 0131 668 2019

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Patched Up Heroes The Central

0191 478 2543

The Zombies Sage Arena

0870 703 4555

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SATURDAY

May 18



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The Great Escape: Parquet

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Deal/White Fence/Deap Vally/The

Stripes/Tribes/Highasakite/

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Various venues 0871 230 1094

BRISTOL

Bright Street/Shake The Tree

Louisiana 0117 926 5978

Pierce The Veil Fleece 0117 945 0996

The Resplendence Fire Engine

07521 974070

Spiers & Boden Colston Hall

0117 922 3683

Suuns Exchange 0117 9304538

CAMBRIDGE

John Grant Junction 01223 511511

CARDIFF

The Bilms Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Rollo Markee Dempseys

029 2025 2024

Sleeping With Sirens CF10

02920 781 400

Zoetrope/Fight Like Apes Clwb Ifor

Bach 029 2023 2199

CARLISLE

The Sun Explodes Brickyard

01228 512 220

COVENTRY

Celebration Taylor John's House

024 7655 9958

Ghostpoet Kasbah 024 7655 4473

DERBY

OPM The Hairy Dog

DERBY

Rura Culturall Uf Chanain

028 7126 4132

EDINBURGH

Antonio Forcione Queen's Hall

0131 668 2019

Cauldstane Slap Captain's Bar

01316 682312

John Cooper Clarke Picture House

0844 847 1740

Woodenbox Electric Circus

0131 226 4224

EXETER

Shooglenifty Phoenix 01392 667080

FALMOUTH

Dragter/Moriarty/Mister Postman

Miss Peapod's 0871 230 1094

GATESHEAD

Tubesnake Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

GLASGOW

Bob Mould Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

The Handsome Family The Arches

0141 565 1000

Stag & Dagger: How To Dress

Well/Randolph's Leap/Mac

DeMarco/Temples/The Recovery/

United Fruit/The Velveten Saints/

Phosphorescent/Bill Ryder-Jones/

Vondelpark/Wolf People/

Widowspeak/Must/Kitty The Lion/

Hudson Taylor/Hawk Eyes/Chris

Devotion & The Expectations/

French Wives/Filthy Boy/Eugene

Twist/Donald MacDonald And The

Islands/Divorce/Blindfolds/Baby

Strange/MT/Rachel Sermanni/

Various venues 0871 230 1094

Jamie Jones/Lee Foss/Burnski/

Alex Arnout/Robert James/Richy

Ahmed/Russ Yallop/Waff Arches

0141 221 4001

Journey/Whitesnake SECC

0141 248 3000

MC Lars Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871

GLOUCESTER

Beretta Suicide Brunswick

01452 415295

HULL

Then Jerico The Welly 01482 221113

LEEDS

Blueprint New Roscoe 0113 246 0778

Canaya Elger 0113 244 4105

Euthemia Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264

Lord Huron Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

Seagraves Wharf Chambers

The Twang/Cast O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

LEICESTER

Clubs/The Cream Tangerines

The Cookie Jar 0116 2531212

LIVERPOOL

Dick Venom & The Terrortones Mello

Mello 0151 707 0898

Jon Byrne Parr St Studios

0151 707 3727

Magic Arm/We The Dead Leaf On

Bold St 0151 707 7747

The Morning Shakes O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Si Connelly Zanzibar 0151 707 0633

The Specials Olympia Theatre

0151 263 6633

LONDON

Abolition/Mankind/Control/

Survival Sberight Arms

020 7729 0937

Andrew Weatherall/Phil Kieran

Fabric 020 7336 8898

Andy Cairns Borderline

020 7734 5547

Baby Dee/Little Annie Café Oto

0871 230 1094

Black Sun Empire/Moose/Klute/

Emperor Cable Club 020 7403 7730

Bonobo/Gilles Peterson/The

Invisible/Lukid/Bullion/Blue

Daisy/Illum Sphere/Letherette

Roundhouse 020 7482 7318

Dance Gavin Dance Garage

020 7607 1818

Dead By April Underworld

020 7482 1932

Diabel Cissokho Hackney Attic

0871 902 5734

Don't Wait Animate Barfly

0870 907 0999

The Hookers The Pipeline

020 7377 6860

Matt Berry O2 Academy Islington

0870 477 2000

McFly Wembley Arena

0870 060 0870

Mellor Underbelly 0207 613 3105

Mr Scruff KOKO 020 7388 3222

The Residents/Clinic Barbican Centre

020 7638 8891

Simian Mobile Disco/John Heckle/

Martyn XOVO 020 7729 5959

Slim Chance Half Moon 020 7274 2733

The St Pierre Snake Invasion/

Cattle Windmill 020 8671 0700

Trifiction/Ingested/Dripback Black

Heart 020 7428 9730

MANCHESTER

The Exploited/Discharge The Ritz

0161 2364355

Funmi Olawumi Band On The Wall

0161 832 6625

Hang The Bastard/Nomad/End

Reign/Esoteric Youth Satan's Hollow

0161 236 0666

Hurray For The Riff Raff The Castle

0161 237 9485

Neil Atkins Common Bar

0161 832 9245

The Postal Service/Stealing Sheep/

Jenny Lewis Academy 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE

Mark Knopfler Metro Radio Arena

0870 707 8000

Nine Below Zero Cluny 0191 230 4474

NORWICH

Benjamin Francis Leftwich

Waterfront 01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM

Purson Rock City 08713 100000

The Skints/Gecko Rescue Rooms

0115 958 8484

OXFORD

Catfish & The Bottlemen O2

Academy 2 0870 477 2000

PLYMOUTH

Buzcocks C103 01752 662586

Leona Lewis Pavilions 01752 229922

White Rabbit White Rabbit

01752 227522

PORTSMOUTH

Bittertown Marys Cellars

0871 230 1094

PRESTON

Stiff Little Fingers 53 Degrees

01772 893 000

READING

Ben Marwood Rising Sun Arts Centre

0118 986 6788

SHEFFIELD

Andy Bell/Sandie Shaw/Kim Wilde/

Glenn Gregory/Shingai Shinowa/

Echoes O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

Highway Child New Barrack Tavern

0114 234 9148

The Idle Hands Greystones

0114 266 5599

Inherit The Stars/Sweet Little

Machine Corporation 0114 276 0262

SOUTHAMPTON

Hungry Kids Of Hungary Unit

02380 225612

Maya Jane Coles Junk Club

023 8033 5445

STONE ON TRENT

Breaking Satellites Sugarmill

01782 214 991

Honningbarna Underground

01782 219944

ST ALBANS

The Zipheads/Your Favorite

Enemies/Subdivision Horn

01727 853 143

SWANSEA

Stacey Kent Taliesin Arts Centre

01792 295438

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Skaters The Forum 0871 277 7101

WAKEFIELD

Louise Distras Warehouse 23

01924 361300

WATFORD

Telstar Flag 01923 218413

WOLVERHAMPTON

My Great Affliction Slade Rooms

0870 320 7000

YORK

Battle Lines Fibbers 01904 651 250

SUNDAY

May 19

BIRMINGHAM

Craig David The Institute

0844 248 5037

Kieran Goss Kitchen Garden Café

0121 443 4725

Paper Aeroplanes Glee Club

0870 241 5093

Skaters Symphony Hall 0121 780 3333

BRISTOL

Clifton Arcade/Montrose/

Shotaway/The Leaves Fleece

0117 945 0996

How To Dress Well Thekla

08713 100000

CAMBRIDGE

Wolf People Portland Arms

01223 357268

CARDIFF

The Abyssinians Bogiez

029 2034 1463

Lucy Rose Glee Club 0870 241 5093

Mount Eerie Buffalo Bar

02920 310312

EDINBURGH

Becka Wolfe/Sam Gillespie Captain's

Bar 01316 682312

Dodge Voodoo Rooms 0131 556 7060

Seth Lakeman Liquid Room

0131 225 2564

GATESHEAD

Fish Sage Arena 0870 703 4555

The Handsome Family Old Town Hall

0191 433 6916

GLASGOW

Insision Audio

Joe Gideon & The Shark King Tut's

Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Manran Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

Where The Folks At? Flying Duck

0141 564 1450

LEEDS

Benjamin Francis Leftwich

Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

Fizzer Packhorse 0113 245 3980

Rene HiFi Club 0113 242 7353

LEICESTER

Josh Kemp/The Big Figure Firebug

MONDAY

May 20



The Flaming Lips,
Roundhouse, London

ABERDEEN
John Cooper Clarke Lemon Tree
01224 642230

BELFAST
MC Lars Auntie Annie's
028 9050 1660

BIRMINGHAM
Andrew McMahon Glee Club
0870 241 5093
Bo Ningen Hare & Hounds
0870 264 3333
Princess Chelsea The Institute
0844 248 5037
Steve Earle & The Dukes Symphony
Hall 0121 780 3333

BRIGHTON
Dry The River The Haunt
01273 770 847
Seapony The Hope 01273 723 568

BRISTOL
Senses Fall Thekla 08713 100000

CAMBRIDGE
Shooglenifty Junction 01223 511511

CARDIFF
Hungry Kids Of Hungary Buffalo Bar
02920 310312
Purling Hiss/Rough Music/Chain Of
Flowers Undertone 029 2022 8883
Spilers & Boden St David's Hall
029 2087 8444
Then Jerico The Globe 07738 983947

EDINBURGH
Ewan Forfar Captain's Bar
01316 682312
Mt Wolf The Caves
0131 557 8989

EXETER
Lucy Rose University, Lemon Grove
01392 263519

GLASGOW
Benjamin Francis Leftwich 02 ABC
0870 903 3444

The Skints King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279

LEEDS
Mac DeMarco/Widowspeak/
Bleached Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

LIVERPOOL
Catfish & The Bottlemen Kazimier
0871 230 1094
How To Dress Well Leaf On Bold St
0151 707 7747
Your Favorite Enemies/White Cliff
Shipping Forecast 0151 709 6901

LONDON
Allah-Las Dingwalls 020 7267 1577
The Beards Hoxton Square Bar &
Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Blue Harlem 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Dope Body The Lexington
020 7837 5387
Eric Clapton Royal Albert Hall
020 7589 8212
The Flaming Lips/Foxygen
Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
The Hookers Black Heart
020 7428 9730
Lana Del Rey Hammersmith Apollo
0870 606 3400
Lucy Ward Green Note 0871 230 1094
Martins Rokis Café Oto
0871 230 1094
Melvins Electric Brixton
020 7274 2290
Oddisee Barfly 0870 907 0999
On And On Cargo 0207 749 7840
Parquet Courts Rough Trade East
0207 392 7788
The Postal Service/Stealing Sheep/
Jenny Lewis 02 Academy Brixton
0870 477 2000
Rachel Lee Paige Half Moon
020 7274 2733

Young Galaxy/The Deer Tracks/
Humans Birthdays 0 20 7923 1680

MANCHESTER
Bob Mould Academy 3 0161 832 1111
Brokencyde/Millionaires Sound
Control 0161 236 0340
Princess Chelsea Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019
Rokia Traoré Band On The Wall
0161 832 6625

NEWCASTLE
Brian McFadden 02 Academy
0870 477 2000
Life In Film King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0191 265 4282
Miles Hunt & Erica Nockalls Cluny 2
0191 230 4474

NORWICH
Gordon Giltrap Arts Centre
01603 660 352
Skaters Waterfront 01603 632 717

NOTTINGHAM
Bonobo Rock City 08713 100000
Meat Loaf Capital FM Arena
0115 948 4526
Sleeping With Sirens Rescue Rooms
0115 958 8484

OXFORD
The Summer Set 02 Academy 2
0870 477 2000

SALFORD
The Zombies Lowry 0161 876 2121

SHEFFIELD
Journey Motorpoint Arena
01142 565656
Mount Eerie Queens Social Club
0114 272 5544

SOUTHAMPTON
Public Service Broadcasting Roxx

YORK
OPM The Duchess 01904 641 413
Pea Sea Basement 01904 612 940

TUESDAY

May 21

ABERDEEN
Rachel Sermanni/Cara Mitchell
Lemon Tree 01224 642230

BELFAST
Alicia Keys Odyssey 028 9073 9074

BIRMINGHAM
The Beards Hare & Hounds
0870 264 3333
The Specials 02 Academy
0870 477 2000
Wasted Youth Adam & Eve
0121 693 1500

BOURNEMOUTH
Mark Knopfler International Centre
0870 111 3000

BRIGHTON
Public Service Broadcasting
The Haunt 01273 770 847

BRISTOL
Melvins Exchange 0117 9304538
Paper Aeroplanes Colston Hall
0117 922 3683
The Summer Set Thekla
08713 100000

CARDIFF
Senses Fall/The Marmozets Clwb
Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

DERRY
Pierce The Veil Nerve Centre
028 7126 0562

EDINBURGH
Neil Thomson Captain's Bar
01316 682312

GLASGOW
Brokencyde Stereo 0141 576 5018
Life In Film King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
Mount Eerie Nice'n'Sleazy
0141 333 9637
Princess Chelsea Broadcast
0141 332 7304
Tribes Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

HULL
OPM Adelphi 01482 348216

LEEDS
George Fame Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866
Three Blind Wolves Oporto
0113 245 4444

LEICESTER
Widowspeak Musician 0116 251 0080

LIVERPOOL
Deap Vally East Village Arts Club
Johnny Sands Leaf On Bold St
0151 707 7747

LONDON
A\$AP Rocky 02 Academy Brixton
0870 477 2000
Blue Hawaii Birthdays 0 20 7923 1680
Bob Mould Electric Ballroom
020 7485 9006
Cayucas The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Chet Faker Cargo 0207 749 7840
The Crookes/The Heartbreaks Scala
020 7833 2022
The Deer Tracks The Waiting Rooms
020 8886 7781
Eric Clapton Royal Albert Hall
020 7589 8212
The Flaming Lips/Foxygen
Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Foxyes Sebright Arms 020 7729 0937
Ikil Orilon 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622
Jesse Boykins III Barfly
0870 907 0999
Just Handshakes/Crows Old Blue
Last 020 7613 2478
Killer Mike XOYO 020 7729 5959
Little Green Cars Dingwalls
020 7267 1577
Mac DeMarco Garage 020 7607 1818
Orchid Underworld 020 7482 1932
The Prisonaires The Hob
0208 855 0496
Seapony Windmill 020 8671 0700
Steve Earle Royal Festival Hall
020 7960 4242
Terry Reid Half Moon 020 7274 2733
Tricky Heaven 020 7930 2020
Villagers Electric Brixton
020 7274 2290
Watsky/Dumbfounded 02 Academy
Islington 0870 477 2000

MANCHESTER
Andrew McMahon Ruby Lounge
0161 834 1392
Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs Soup
Kitchen 0161 236 5100

Dope Body The Bay Horse
0161 661 1041
Gold Teeth Deaf Institute
0161 330 4019
Hot Damn/Through Colour Retro
Bar 0161 274 4892
The Skints Academy 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
Benjamin Francis Leftwich
Northumbria University
Dead Belgian Cluny 2 0191 230 4474
Joyce The Librarian/Skylark
Song/Cyan Circus Head Of Steam
0191 232 4379
Lord Huron Cluny 0191 230 4474
Sleeping With Sirens 02 Academy
0870 477 2000

NORWICH
The Computers Waterfront
01603 632 717
Cutlin Edge Brickmakers
01603 441 118
Rokia Traoré Open 01603 763 111

NOTTINGHAM
The Chase/Minimum/The
Bystanders/Paper Café Rescue
Rooms 0115 958 8484
Nomeansno Doghouse Studios
0871 210 2040

PORTSMOUTH
Kieran Goss Cellars 0871 230 1094
MC Lars Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

SHEFFIELD
Bonobo Plug 0114 276 7093
The Handsome Family Greystones
0114 266 5599
Lady Malsery Upper Chapel
0114 276 7114

SOUTHAMPTON
Craig David Guildhall
023 8063 2601
Lucy Rose Brook
023 8055 5366

STOCKTON
Fish Arc 01642 666600

WOLVERHAMPTON
The Defiled Slade Rooms
0870 320 7000



Charlie Boyer And The
Voyeurs, Soup, Manchester

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CREATURE COMFORTS, ROEG TRADER, FRESH JAM



THE WORLD WILL LISTEN

Having just signed to Rough Trade and released their first single, 'Hand In Glove', The Smiths are probed about why they chose such a name. "It's a very stray kind of name, very timeless," Morrissey replies. The band go on to outline why their music is important: "We're out to prove you don't need dazling technology to produce music."

THE SPREADING OF THE JAM

Six months on from The Jam splitting, bassist Bruce Foxton tells NME about the band's break-up. "We could all see Paul wasn't happy," he says, reflecting on their final shows, "I could have done with a couple of more years." Setting out on the solo trail, Foxton discusses his struggle to find a backing band with "a fairly smart image - suits and stuff".

SCARY MONSTERS

With The Creatures' first full-length album due for release, Siouxsie Sioux braves a bed of nails for the NME cover. Inside, she and fellow band member Budgie discuss adopting zoo animals as well as their joint side-project from proto-goth act Siouxsie And The Banshees.

"We have certain obligations with the Banshees," Budgie says of the legendary doom-mongers. Siouxsie adds, "The purpose of The Creatures is being able to do something more relaxed - there's none of the tensions you have with the Banshees because that's so... big."

Regarding the recording process, drummer Budgie says they wanted "to go somewhere really isolated". That resulted in the duo flying to Hawaii. "We didn't have work permits," he adds, "so we had to bluff our way through customs and say we were just there on holiday."

"I hate cool and meaningful and deep!" Budgie declares when asked if they set out to be "profound" with the album. Siouxsie disagrees: "Profound as in original and really meaningful? In that way, to us, I think so."

And their ultimate dream for the project? "I'd like people to see us as cute!" Sioux giggles, then continues, "I wish you could set up a video and tape your dreams! That should be a new entertainment. It's really my burning ambition to see them."

ALSO IN THE ISSUE THAT WEEK

• Nicolas Roeg, the director whose films include *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, featuring David Bowie, and *Performance*, starring Mick Jagger, discusses his career. "The film becomes a habitation in my life," he says, confusingly.

• A week after Muddy Waters' death, NME's Charles Shaar Murray pays tribute to the American blues musician who "put the rhythm into rock'n'roll" and "taught the world" how to play electric music.

• Motörhead's 'I Got Mine' and Thin Lizzy's 'Thunder And Lightning' are reviewed, with the former (along with the likes of Twisted Sister) being described as "the ugliest sounds this side of Jimmy Page".

• Bowie's 'Let's Dance', produced by Nile Rodgers, holds the top spot on the UK albums chart for a fourth week after overtaking Michael Jackson's 'Thriller'.

NME

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1+32A Miles from home, must try and remember oneself (4-6-3-3-3)
 8+7D Frankie And The Heartstrings' new release, but there's none for us (7-3-3)
 9 Grimly turns out a single for Willy Moon (2-4)
 11 Django Django's number is in this crossword (1-1-1)
 12 Echo And The Bunnymen remained fresh and vital on this album (9)
 13+28A A crap line rewritten by keyboard player in The Animals (4-5)
 14 Pet Shop Boys album is agreeable (3)
 15 A tense arrangement made for Swedish group who first charted as an Abba tribute group (1-5)
 16 This was huge for Underworld (5)
 20 "I too am prescribed as freely as any decongestant", 2011 (4-1)
 21+29D Somehow make Claire get by with folk/punk band formed out of The Men They Couldn't Hang (7-4)
 23 (See 18 down)
 24 He was respectfully and familiarly named by Lambchop on album (2-1)
 25 The Thompson Twins got their opening as they went 'Into The ...' (3)
 27 The Lightning Seeds showed a transformation with this single (6)
 28 (See 13 across)
 30 Express some surprise at the passion shown by Green Day (2-4)
 31 Kelly Rowland took this song without permission (5)
 32 (See 1 across)
 33 OMD's notes written down on a piece of music actually say something (8)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Tribes have room to take steps with their music (9)
 2 Electronic dance band whose albums include 'Industrial Complex' (6-3)

3 B-side doing 'Something Else', the Sex Pistols were '... In The Riffin' (7)

4+25D Glad Gregory turned up with a Neil Young album (6-5)

5 He had a Number One hit 10 years ago with 'Fuck It (I Don't Want You Back)' (5)

6 "Hiawatha didn't bother too much about Minnie Ha Ha and her tender touch", The Sweet (3-3-3)

7 (See 8 across)

10 The practice of going it alone with Tame Impala (8)

17 Stevie Wonder very tense about his first UK hit (7)

18+23A Daft Punk have another go at doing a number (3-4-4)

19 Connection between Limp Bizkit, Eddie Cochran and Frank Sinatra (2-3)

22 Get this Automatic record back or just put another sleeve on it (7)

25 (See 4 down)

26 Nickname of Hadouken's Daniel Rice (5)

28 In addition this was by Echelon on Alan McGee's Poptones label (4)

29 (See 21 across)

31 Simple Minds began with a bit of The xx (3)

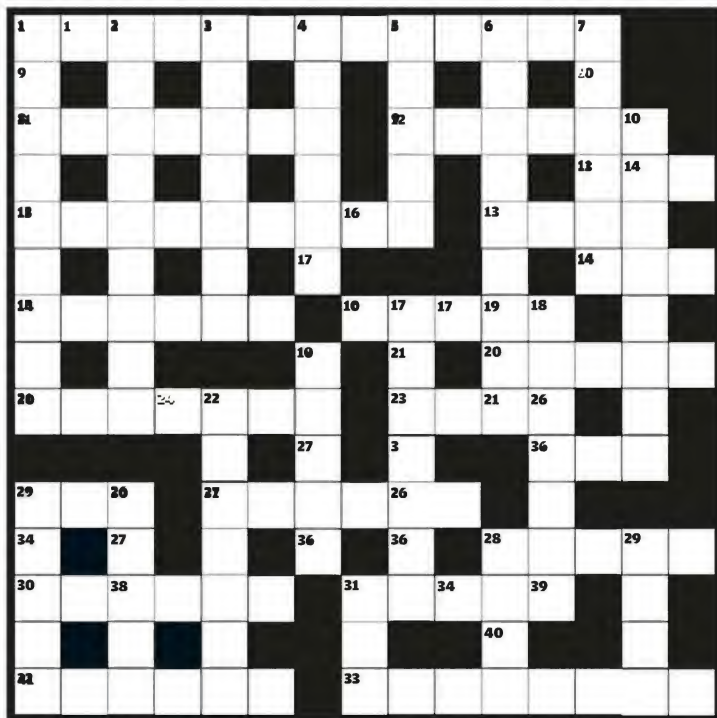
APRIL 13 ANSWERS

ACROSS

1 Upstarts, 5 Sunset, 8 Devotion, 9+20D It's Not Over Yet, 10 Ring My Bell, 11 Vile, 14 Earthling, 18 Age, 19 So, 21 Duet, 25 Inme, 26 RAK, 27+17A Return To Sender, 29 Okay, 31+32A The The

DOWN

1 Understated, 2 Seven Seas, 3 Autumnson, 4 Trouble, 5+24A Still I'm Sad, 6+13A Nashville Teens, 7+33A To The Limit, 12 Lungs, 15 Aerosmith, 16 Teardrop, 22 Used, 23 Touch, 24 Inni, 25+28A Iko Iko, 30 Kim



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COLLECTORS' CORNER

ALICE COOPER

The musical gems that no Alice Cooper fan should be without



THE SPIDERS - DON'T BLOW YOUR MIND (1966)



In the early '60s, Cooper, then known by his real name of Vincent

Furnier, formed The Earwigs, who eventually became The Spiders. Their second single was an original composition and was a hit in Phoenix, Arizona, where Furnier was attending school.

Need To Know: The band changed their name to The Nazz, until they found out Todd Rundgren had a band of the same name. The next suggestion was Alice Cooper...

PRETTIES FOR YOU (1969)

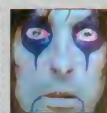


Alice Cooper's debut album, although at this point it

was still the name of the band rather than the singer. The group had yet to formulate the hard-rock sound that made them famous, and instead the tunes take on the more psychedelic flavour of the time. However, commercial success was still a couple of years away.

Need To Know: 'Reflected', which was Alice Cooper's first single, was later rewritten as 'Elected'.

FROM THE INSIDE (1978)

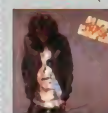


Cooper's 11th studio album came at a hugely significant

point for him - it was released just after his recovery from the alcoholism that blighted his life and career throughout the early '70s. The record was actually inspired by his stay in a sanatorium drying out, and the characters in the songs are based on people he met while there.

Need To Know: Cooper got some help for the lyrics from Elton John's usual co-writer Bernie Taupin.

TRASH (1989)



Cooper's commercial stock had been in the doldrums for

years. Following a hugely successful comeback tour a couple of years earlier, this LP saw a dramatic upturn in his fortunes, mainly as a result of the global smash hit 'Poison' - his biggest ever hit in the UK, getting to Number Two in the singles chart.

Need To Know: Cooper got some help from ace songwriter Desmond Child, who has also penned hits for the likes of Aerosmith, Kiss and Bon Jovi.

FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND,
THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Ben Hewitt



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Letter of the week

The best of the NME mailbag



DEMO-CRAZY

From: Catherine Ridley

To: NME

The exclusive demo CD, The Vaccines' 'Home Is Where The Start Is' (NME, May 4), as well as The Cribs' 'Payola: The Demos' from a few issues back, gave me almost the same level of excitement about these bands as when I listened to them for the first time. With The Vaccines in particular, I found myself rediscovering my love for their gutsy rock'n'roll riffs and Justin's brooding yet delicate vocals. Such demos are equal parts raw passion and genuine vulnerability, and arguably display a band at their very finest. They show their greatest strengths and weaknesses in their most unadulterated form, both of which are usually held back or masked on the final record – and that, combined with unreleased, never-heard-before tracks, means I find myself playing these free gems as often as albums I've paid good money for. Thanks for the demos, NME, and keep them coming.

NME's response...

A lesson to all would-be correspondents to *Fanmail*: shower us with praise, tell us we're brilliant, hail us as life-changing heroes, and you're practically nailed-on to be bestowed with the hallowed Letter Of The Week gong. Catherine, my friend, you are an exemplar to all

of your missive-writing peers. But seriously: we're genuinely chuffed that you've got so much love for your Vaccines freebie, and I reckon you're spot-on about how brilliant and illuminating some demos can be, too. Some, of course, will always be nothing more than the

ramshackle ramblings of some twat armed with a half-thimble of talent and a cheap microphone. But there are those special sparse recordings that can really show you how much of a true genius your favourite artists really are – I'll always harbour a soft spot for PJ Harvey's

guttural '4-Track Demos', because they have a snarky, snarling terror it's hard to recapture when you're in a plusher recording studio. And isn't it comforting to know that good songs can still shine through the dross? Backslaps to everyone all round, I say – BH

YEP, YOU STILL HATE ONE DIRECTION

From: Joshua Peart

To: NME

Upon reading this section of the magazine just the other week, I was surprised at the fury some people have for One Direction and Justin Bieber. Yes, they're arsewipes but they're there for a reason. I don't mean to get deep about this, but while 'Directioners' and 'Beliebers' are out screaming for them, we're here converging over our own, tasteful music. Smoke-stained lullabies drenched in whiskey may be our favourites, but my point is not that we should hate upon One Direction and Bieber; instead, we should celebrate our love for good music, we should nod when we see a matching festival band on the wrist of someone on the street, we should smile at people on the bus with familiar album artwork. These are the only people that matter – not the 'Directioners' and 'Beliebers', as they're blatantly delusional. If they didn't converge, then how would we have our small demographic of marvellous human beings? All I'm saying is: don't join in music-hating, join in music-loving.

From: Rachael Simpson

To: NME

I'm probably taking this too seriously, but I was rather disappointed when Justin Young said that anyone who disagreed with his collaboration with One Direction was "small-minded". I quite like to think I'm not. I see the appeal in being able to write pop music on the side. It seems somewhat enjoyable. BUT WHY ONE DIRECTION? I'm being blinded by hate, aren't I? I think it's a waste. It's like everyone in the music industry is playing Monopoly, and he is helping them cheat. Just the way I see it.

From: NME

To: Rachael Simpson;

Joshua Peart

Oh, Rachael and Joshua. I, too, used to be like you: young and self-righteous, with a superiority complex and full of murderous rage. I can still remember being appalled by a feature in this very magazine a few years ago, in which one of my all-time heroes, Blondie's Debbie Harry, was interviewed by The Kooks' Luke Pritchard. And she liked him. She *liked* The Kooks. And I wanted to roll up said issue and bash pretty-boy Pritchard in the face with it until it dissolved into crimson mist, while yelling, "TELL ME HOW NAIVE I AM NOW, YOU DRIPPY CUNT." But I was wrong. So I'll just say this: if you both believe that One Direction are shit and Justin is brilliant, then surely it's a good thing he's going to write some songs for them, because it'll make them slightly more palatable? Cling on to this glimmer of hope and, I promise, life will seem much better – BH

DIG OUT YOUR PUNS

From: Ellie Barker

To: NME

As someone who's never seen Oasis play live because I was too young to go to gigs by myself, I really want to see this Oasis 2015 cult movement come to light. How great would it be to see them back onstage celebrating 20 years of '(What's The Story) Morning Glory?' with perhaps even a Bonehead cameo too? But would it ruin their reputation? Liam obviously wants it to happen for the money and Noel would secretly be forever smug about his success compared to Beady Eye. A new album would most likely come with the reunion and, considering the different directions they've taken, I'm pretty sure it would result in something, erm, rather unusual. In my experience, these reunions are easily forgettable. New Order, Blur and, most recently, The Stone

WIN!
LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS
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TRAVEL GUITAR
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Roses – my Sunday evening at Heaton Park was spectacular, but is everyone not just a bit tired of their massive impersonal shows and, ultimately, very scared about their follow-up to 'Second Coming'? However much bigger than the Roses Oasis were, it'd be the same formula they'd use. Besides, who wants the inevitable Gallagher arguments when they eventually split again? I don't.

From: Gaby Alessa

To: NME

You are an Oasis and I'm lost in the middle of the desert right now. So, Oasis, can you imagine how bad I need you to be there? To live forever is what you've told me, and "don't go away" is exactly what I want to tell you. You give love just like a bomb all around the world, so, let there be love again from you. Maybe this is what you called the importance of being idle, and maybe I'm just a girl in a dirty shirt who can't tell you to show up again. But, I hope I'm electric enough to make you say "Hello!" again.

From: NME

To: Ellie Barker; Gaby Alessa

It's a tough one to call, isn't it? On one hand, Ellie, you make some very sensible points about the potential pitfalls of an Oasis reunion. Would Liam and Noel be doing it for the right reasons, or just a shitload of cash? Could they stand to be in the same



STALKERS

From: Leigh

To: NME

This is my girlfriend Carla in a Deap Vally sandwich after they literally rocked the boat (Thekla) in Bristol. Brunette bass player, anyone?

dressing room, or would it all end in fisticuffs? And, most importantly, would it even be any good? Gaby, you don't actually have a logical argument whatsoever, but you have lots of puns – bonkers, ill-conceived but admirably dedicated puns. So I'm on your side: sure, some might say it's a bad idea, but I don't think Liam and Noel should let their old magic slide away. So let's just roll with it, and hopefully they won't end up making a complete Digsy's dinner of it, or we'll all be crying our hearts out. Am I doing it right? – BH

PAID BY THE PALMAS

From: Natt Day

To: NME

Do you guys get paid every time you mention Palma Violets? I was just wondering

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because it's really the only logical reason I can come up with to explain the sheer number of times you mention Palma Violets on a weekly basis. Now, I know Palma Violets are really good and lots of people love Palma Violets (I include myself in this) but it doesn't half get tedious to see Palma Violets mentioned so often. It's got to the point where I actually start counting how many references to Palma Violets you can make (last week it was six) and it's driving me slightly insane.

From: NME

To: Natt Day

Natt, we receive no financial remuneration for mentioning Palma Violets, and both we and Palma Violets firmly deny your allegations – BH

DILEMMAS (AND PALMA VIOLETS)

From: Adam Pyzer

To: NME

I need help: do I go to Ibiza

Web Slings

The highlight of this week's NME.COM action

TYLER RESPONDS TO DRINK AD CRITICISM

Ah, Tyler, The Creator: he's forever destined to be sulking on rap's naughty step after some stomach-turning shock-tactic or another, isn't he? This time, the Odd Future leader caused a kerfuffle when the advert he directed for drinks company Mountain Dew was lambasted for being racist – the 60-second clip depicted a white woman, sporting a black eye and using crutches, eyeing a police line-up purely comprised of black men and, erm, a goat. Despite receiving a lot of flak for perpetuating racist stereotypes, Tyler's been unrepentant about the commercial. "I just actually can't believe that somebody sat there and pointed out that it was all black people, instead of being confused that it was a freaking goat talking," he said. "That's mind-blowing." And he was adamant, too, that said criticism will have no effect on his work. "I mean, it's not gonna change my art in any way," he insisted. He's sticking to his guns, then – but what did you lot make of it?



Best of the responses...

Ugh. I just read he's from Los Angeles... I'm sincerely sorry my city gave you this shit head, world.
Michael Christopher

Tyler, The Creator is an extremely talented individual, and I actually

am proud that he and the other members of Odd Future are from Los Angeles, my city too, Michael.
Ricky Beltran

It's clearly a satire of how ridiculous white supremacy in America is – I guess most

Americans are just too dumb to realise this.
Harry Atkinson

People aren't criticising it, calling it racist or condoning violence against women. They're only trying to point out that this commercial is

a piece of shit, and so is Tyler's attempt at art.
Stan Milo

I'm a huge fan of Tyler and all I can say is getting him to make an advert is stupidity on Mountain Dew's side.
James Thomas

with the lads or Glastonbury with my dad?

From: NME

To: Adam Pyzer

Easily solved, Adam: where are Palma Violets more likely to be? Probably Glastonbury, right? So go there. And watch Palma Violets. Because Palma Violets are bloody great, aren't they? – BH

TO HULL AND BACK

From: Natalie Alexakis

To: NME

I just don't understand why Hull barely has any decent gigs going on. It's not like we have poor venues – in fact, we have the best small venues as well as bigger ones too! There's a great deal of people in Hull with great taste in music and enthusiasm at gigs; it's totally unfair we have to travel hours away to see a band. It seems that they forget about the 'smaller' cities – do they really not like Hull? Bloody hell, it's not that much of a shithole.

From: NME

To: Natalie Alexakis

Commissions, Natalie. I grew up in Cornwall, which wasn't exactly a must-visit destination for touring bands, either, so I feel your pain. It's rubbish when your favourite bands don't fancy venturing outside the big cities, isn't it? Which is exactly why we set up our Small Venues campaign – to make sure fans across all of the UK get to see great live music as often as possible. BUT did you know Palma Violets once played in Hull? October 2012. It was great – BH

SEX, DRUGS, ROCK'N'ROLL – AND BED SHEETS

From: Dean Rogers

To: NME

Being a fan of both NME and a nice comfortable bed, I have to ask: are you aware of anywhere that sells album art printed on bed sheets? And am I the only person who wants some?



STALKERS

From: Melissa

To: NME

Me and my mate Nicci met Johnny Marr after his Manchester gig. He is so down to earth and loved talking to all of his fans!

From: NME

To: Dean Rogers

Actually, Dean, I have some Palma Violets bed sheets. And let me tell you, nothing beats being swaddled up in a Palma Violets duvet. So if you'd like to get your own set of Palma Violets bedding, then email us at keppentioning@palma.violets.com – BH

DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

This Week

GARY POWELL THE LIBERTINES

QUESTION 1

In Roger Sargent's famous portrait of *The Libertines* wearing the red soldier jackets, which band member is the only one who has his jacket open?

"I think that would be me."

Correct



Carl, Pete and Gary were formerly conjoined triplets

QUESTION 2

The band IC1s released 'Karma (It's On Your Side)' on your record label, 25th Hour Convenience Store, with profits going to Shelter. Name three other songs with the word 'karma' in the title.

"'Karma Police', Radiohead.

'Karmacoma', Massive

Attack. I bet you didn't

see that one coming. And

'Karma Chameleon' by

Culture Club. '(Sings) Karma

karma karma karma karma

chameleon...'"

Correct

QUESTION 3

'Up The Bracket' is slang for what?

"A punch in the throat. No-one's ever had the guts to try that on me. A knee in the balls, yes."

Correct

QUESTION 4

You used to be a session drummer for legendary reggae artist Eddy Grant. What is Eddy's real name?

"I can't remember.

It's not Edward.

You've got me."

Wrong. Edmond

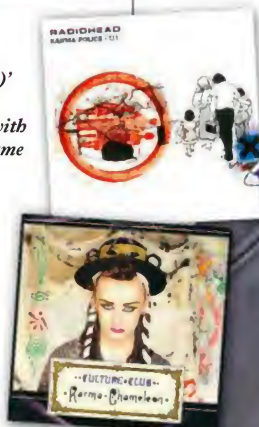
Montague Grant

"Sorry, Eddy."

Correct

QUESTION 5

If every "bang bang" signifies a gun being



Eddy Grant loves practising high fives

fired, how many shots are fired during Dirty Pretty Things' single 'Bang Bang You're Dead'?

"(Thinks for ages)

Is it 12?"

Wrong. It's 11

Correct

QUESTION 6

True or false: at the height of Pete's

fame, The Bath

Chronicle ran

a front-page news story featuring a man who had recently sold Pete a sandwich.

"It sounds unlikely, so it must be true."

Correct

QUESTION 7

The Libertines are named after a book called *The Lusts Of The Libertines*, by which author?

"The Marquis de Sade."

Correct

QUESTION 8

Where, as you once told NME.COM, did you come up with the name for your current band, *The Invasion Of...*?

"I told them 'on the phone', but when I came up with it I was sat on the toilet."

Er... correct. Do you do a lot of your great thinking on the toilet?

"Bearing in mind that the majority of it is shit then I guess so, yeah."

QUESTION 9

What type of hat were you wearing on the cover of NME when *Dirty Pretty Things* appeared on it in April 2006?

"Trilby?"

Correct. Where did you get that hat, Gary?

"I think I got it in Dalston."

Should more people wear hats?

"Given the British climate, yes."

QUESTION 10

True or false: Pete Doherty once commissioned a marble statue of himself being crucified.

"True. Where's my statue? Actually no-one wants to see a statue of my ugly face so that's fair enough."

Correct

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Correct



Pete had a sideline as a human corkscrew

Total Score
8/10

"Cool! Anything that's Libertines-orientated is usually quite shoddy!"

C O M I N G N E X T W E E K

What do **Alex Turner**, **Dave Grohl**,
Trent Reznor and... **Elton John** all have in common?



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